

A Critical Evaluation of the Effects of Neo-liberal (Market-Driven)
Reforms in Achieving the Goal of Human Security in Sierra Leone

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Abstract

This case-study provides a critical evaluation of the effects of neo-liberal (market-driven) reforms in achieving the goal of human security in Sierra Leone after the civil conflict in 2002. In the context of Sierra Leone, there are fundamental questions about the basic security of the population. This mean the ability to live without fear of conflict and the security to do with the ordinary lives of Sierra Leoneans. This is absolutely central to the post-war reconstruction of that country. It represents a major concern for the international community, the Sierra Leone Government, foreign government donors as well as the NGO communities. Underlying these issues is the subject of which development paragon is best suitable in addressing these questions, and what impact will it have on the people. To understand this, the study has framed the issues of education and health, the two aspects which this thesis focuses upon, as a commitment to human security. Human security has become a dominant theme for many development organisations around the world because of it connection with security and development. Education and health are important because they are crucial social and basic human right that should be provided without any form of unfairness by the state. Because of their multiplier effect, they assist in eradicating poverty and further the attainment of human security.

The reforms, which includes privatisation and decentralisation, has been imposed primarily by the World Bank and the IMF to transform the education and health system in order to improve the human security of the Sierra Leonean people. Proponents of these reforms argued that it would provide equal access, make the system more efficient, provide more choices for the population, and enhances accountability and citizens' participation in governance. As a result of these, the study is important for three reasons: first, it assesses the success of these reforms; second, it offers a better understanding of socio-economic development related to education and health as they are now viewed as a commodity; and third, it suggests ways of enhancing the performance of its delivery intended to assist the population. The evaluation is informed by critical theory, the theoretical framework because: of its usefulness in understanding the concept of power/knowledge, ideology and governance, as neo-liberalism has become a discourse of global common sense that frames policy options as though they were natural or not to be questioned, and yet serve to reinforce the interests of dominant groups. Critical theory enable us to make sense of the hidden power relations in the way knowledge/policy is constituted. Second, critical theory is also a qualitative approach and hence comes as a way of critiquing quantitative methodology.

The study argues that it is very problematic to imagine that this strategy (neo-liberal reforms) is actually for the great masses of people living in poor conditions, while it does not address their needs and does nothing to deal with the security of their lives. The study found that the reforms were considered undemocratic, and has led to unequal access thus augmenting fears of stratification on the basis of an individual being rich or poor. Therefore, the study recommends that if the goal of human security is to be achieved, it is important to strengthen citizens' and other local actors' voices in governance to develop effective local policies; and government intervention and commitment is also needed to improve the performance of public schools and health care institutions in order to make them more competitive so that they can co-exist with their private counterparts.

Key Words: Neo-liberalism, critical theory, education policy, health policy, human security, privatisation, decentralisation, social justice, socio-economic development.

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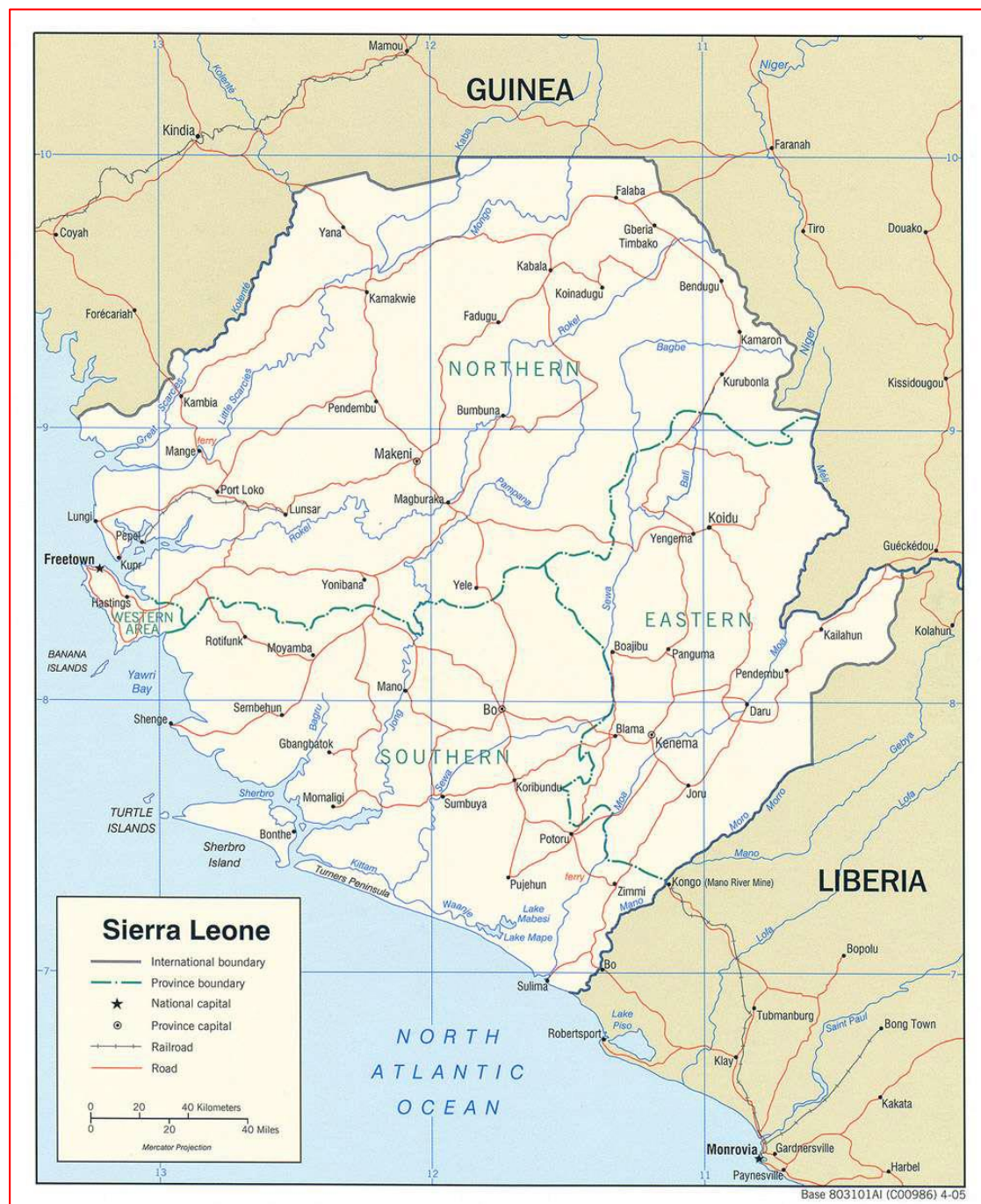
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The Map of Sierra Leone



Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology School Census Report – Vol.1 (2011).

List of Acronyms

AfDB	Africa Development Bank
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AHLC	Ad Hoc Liaison Committee
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AJME	Association of Journalists on Mining and Extractives
APC	All Peoples' Congress
APEC	Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BPEHS	Basic Package of Essential Health Services
BPEHS-SL	Basic Package of Essential Health Services in Sierra Leone
CBHI	Community-Based Health Insurance
CDF	Community Development Fund
CDS	Capacity Development Strategy
CEC	Community Education Centres
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Among Women
CEE	Common Entrance Examination
CHCs	Community Health Centres
CHO	Community Health Officer
CHP	Community Health Posts
CHS	Commission on Human Security
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CJM	Campaign for Just Mining
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CREPS	Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools
CSAE	Centre for the Study of African Economies
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSR	Country Sector Report
DACO	Development Assistance Coordination Office
DEC	District Education Councils
DfID	Department for International Development
DH	District Hospitals
DHMT	District Health Management Teams
DMO	District Medical Officer
ECCE	Early Childhood Care Education
ECOMOG	Economic Community Monitoring Group
EFA	Education for All
EITI	Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative
EPA-SL	Environmental Protection Agency in Sierra Leone
ESP-SL	Education Sector Plan Sierra Leone
EU	European Union
FHCI	Free Health Care Initiative
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone

HCI	Health Care Insurance
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HND	Higher National Diploma
HTC	Higher Teachers Certificate
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IDA	International Development Agency
IE	Illiteracy Eradication
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Financial Corporation
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems and Analysis
IMF	International Monetary Funds
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration and Management
IRCSL	Inter-religious Council Sierra Leone
JCAS	Joint Countries Assistance Strategy
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LMCs	Literacy Management Committees
MCHP	Maternal and Child Health Posts
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEST-SL	Ministry of Education Science & Technology Sierra Leone
MHI	Micro Health Insurance
MoHS-SL	Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone
MPs	Members of Parliament
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NCBE	National Commission for Basic Education
NCTVA	National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards
NEMP	New Education Master Plan
NEP	National Education Policy
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFEC	Non-Formal Education Council
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHAP	National Health Action Plan
NHSSP	National Health Sector Strategic Plan
NIETAR	National Institute for Education, Training, and Research
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
NPSE	National Primary School Education
NPSE	National Primary School Examination
NSHI	National Social Health Insurance
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCHA-	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs,
HSU	Humanitarian Support Unit
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OND	Ordinary National Diploma
OSAA	Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
PHC	Primary Health Care

PHI	Private Health Insurance
PHUs	Peripheral Health Units
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme
QE	Quality Education
RNCHP	Reproductive, New-born and Child Health Policy
RNCHS	Reproductive, New-born and Child Health Strategy
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SC	Secretary General
SECHNs	State Enrolled Community Health Nurses
SEE	Selective Entrance Examination
SHI	Social Health Insurance
SLHISSP	Sierra Leone Health Information Systems Strategic Plan
SLIHS	Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SMC	School Management Committees
SMEs	Small-and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPAYPHD	Strategic Plan for Adolescent and Young People's Health & Development
SSS	Senior Secondary School
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
T/V	Technical/Vocational
TB	Tuberculosis
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendance
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TINA	There Is No Alternative
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UHC	Universal Health Care
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNCTAD	United Nations' Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCOS	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
OC	Social Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMP	United Nations Millennium Project
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USA	United States of America
VCF	Venture Capital Fund
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASSCE	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations
WCS DG	World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organisation
WP	Work Package
WTO	World Trade Organisation

WW I & II World War One and Two

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

This chapter presents an introduction to the thesis and provides an overview of neo-liberalism and human security. The main aim of this chapter is to set out the background through which the study will be explored. The study is intended to carry out a critical evaluation of the effects of the current neo-liberal reforms (market-oriented policies) on two major aspects of human security in Sierra Leone, namely: education and health. It then went on to set out the following: the significance of education and health in achieving human security; the context to the human security crisis in Sierra Leone; an introduction to neo-liberalism and the reforms which have been introduced in education and health; an outline of the thesis argument; the research questions; potential statement of significance; and the structure of the entire thesis.

Global forces and mechanisms, for example multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Funds (IMF), the World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), European Union (EU), and also the World Economic Forum (WEF) have reinforced a neo-liberal agenda, seen as a globalised phenomenon in education and health care policy in developing countries, including Sierra Leone. This has emphasised an entrenched commodification in the delivery of education and health through a process of deregulation, marketisation, privatisation, and decentralisation (Cavagnero et al., 2006). Consequently, education and health care have been modelled as a commodity while parents, students and people in general are seen as consumers in the market. The main argument presented by neo-liberals is that more choice leads to healthy competition, and this in turn tends to improve access, affordability and the quality of education and health in schools, hospitals and health care centres. It motivates and drives individual schools, hospitals and health care centres to improve and compete with others in the services they provide. Hence, the focus of this study is in evaluating whether these claims would enhance the human security of the population is in fact true.

According to Williams & Maruthappu (2013), neo-liberalism is a social and economic system in which the role of free market is particularly accentuated. Its implementation calls for the interference of the government only to create a favourable environment in which the free market is expected to operate efficiently. Since the end of the civil conflict in 2002, the

education and health sectors in Sierra Leone have been subjected to a reform process based on neo-liberal policies. This became evident when, during his inaugural address as president of Sierra Leone in September 2007; Ernest Bai Koroma stated that: “I am going to run Sierra Leone like a business entity.” This was a commitment to the continuation of the neo-liberal reforms started by previous governments. The main components of the reform were deregulation, privatisation (out-of-pocket payments for services), decentralisation, and reduction of government spending on education and health. The objective of the reform is to introduce more choices in the delivery of education and health care to the population. This will encourage competition between public and private institutions and resulting hopefully in a more efficient system, and consequently, better provision of quality services.

The government has therefore enacted new laws to allow the gradual liberalisation of the education and health sector. An example of this is the Local Government Act in 2004 that paved the way for decentralisation of the delivery of education and health to Local District Councils. The deregulation of the education and health system in Sierra Leone, and a reduction of government budget to these key sectors, have all been part of the neo-liberal reform, and have encouraged private organisations to provide education and health care on a fee-for-service basis. This tends not only to increase inequality between the rich and the poor in terms of access to these services, but also to undermine the public education and health institutions in the country. While effective education and health care policies are often committed to raising standards and achieving social equality, it has often been argued that the neo-liberal reforms have had a significant effect in improving access to quality education and health care. This thesis examines such an assumption by reviewing the case of Sierra Leone.

The research sets out to achieve two principal aims: first, to conduct an evaluation in order to offer a critical assessment of the state of education and health care in the country as a result of the introduction of the reforms; and second, to put forward an alternative approach to the neo-liberal agenda which is not only pro-poor but also democratic, participative, thereby ensuring equality and better access to education and health care in order to provide social justice to all citizens. This alternative approach is situated within the lens of “human security” because it put the individual at the centre of analysis, policy and decision-making. Hence, the thesis aims to make two important contributions: first, to add perspective to an alternative of the neo-liberal reform by considering the relevance of democratic mechanisms and practices in influencing the reforms both in economic and social policy; and second, to also make an input to the emerging evidence-based intellectual literature that critically

examines the impact of neo-liberal reform in education and health care. To achieve this, a critical theory framework is employed in order to better explain how these policies have given rise to human insecurity; how the poor and marginalised have been excluded from accessing education and health care services, and the need for effective policies and action to address these problems. The thesis will therefore contribute to the transformation of the education and health systems not only in improving access and quality, but also in making the system more effective and fair through a change in policy.

1.2 Significance of Education and Health in Achieving Human Security

The importance of studying these two strands of human security in this research resonates from the fact that access to better quality education and health care services for all citizens is not only seen globally as a major social human right, which should be provided without any form of biasness by the state, but it is also now seen locally as a key priority for national development. While education and health represent integral components of human security, they are also inextricably linked to the other categories that characterise it, that is, economic, food, environmental, personal, community and political securities (UNDP, 1994).

As main constituents of well-being, education and health are also used in the measure of economic development and quality of life. For example, incomes are associated with the formal education, vocational training and expertise that a person has attained. In particular, education brings about improvements in social equality, good health, participation in the economic sector and democracy (Hannum & Buchmann, 2005). As affirmed by the UN Commission on Human Security, good health also ‘enables people to exercise their choice, pursue social opportunities and plan for their future’ (CHS, 2003, p. 96), and can therefore be considered a prerequisite for sustainable human development and social stability (Burgess et al., 2007). Education and health care are also essential means of addressing risks related to poverty and inequalities (Haas, 2012). Considering the benefits, therefore, education and health are crucial human development goals and essential tools of empowerment for the poor in order to improve their human security. The next section therefore provides an understanding of the concept of human security.

1.3 What is Human Security?

In a more precise form, Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Kostovicova (2010) defined human insecurity as the socio-economic insecurities that arise as a result of a lack of jobs (income generation opportunities), insufficiency or absence of social provisions, and inadequate access to health care and education. As Ewan (2007) argues, human security is seen as a transformative framework that seeks to reinvent the theory and practice of security beyond the national security priorities of states, and focuses more on the dimensions that sustain the security of people through investing in human and community development. For example, where national security thinking defines security in terms of the threat and use of military force, proponents of human security seek to broaden the concept of security to include the ways in which economic, health, education and environmental factors also contribute to forms of insecurity in the daily lives of many people around the world (UNDP, 1994, p. 22; cf. Brown, 2003, pp. 310–314; Walt, 1991, p. 212). Similarly, where national security thinking focuses on existential threats to the values and territorial integrity of states, the human security agenda recognises that states often threaten, rather than protect, their own populations (Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 2; Mack, 2004, p. 366; UNDP, 1994, p. 22). Hence, Ewan (2007) argues that central to the concept of human security is a people-centred approach that broadens the concept of security in understanding the view that, the security concerns of individuals are best served by the security policies of their states. This distinction of human security as a transformative framework illustrates two key points: first, human security is concern about the security of the individual, for example access to better quality education and health care services; and second, how actions of the state create human insecurities through the implementation of ineffective policies.

The evolution of the human security concept has provided new opportunities to countries and communities everywhere to address the risks and threats to human development and to implement strategies that strengthen human security (Periago, 2012:357). This approach places the individual at the centre of analysis, and is therefore mainly concerned with the participation, inclusion, and empowerment of people not only at the individual but also at the community levels (OCHA-HSU, 2009). A human security approach in understanding the impact of neo-liberal reforms in education and health care in Sierra Leone is, therefore, essentially an attempt at, as Ahearne (2009) said, transforming the way education and health care is provided to all Sierra Leoneans.

Poverty, as a major obstacle to both education and human health, is a major component of human insecurity. While it is multidimensional in nature, it also means that opportunities and choices most basic to human development are denied (HDR, 1997:15). It can be defined in either relative or absolute terms. Absolute poverty, according to UNDP Human Development Report (1997)(also see <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/poverty/>) measures poverty in relation to the amount of money necessary to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. The report noted that the concept of absolute poverty is not concerned with broader quality of life issues or with the overall level of inequality in society and hence fails to recognise that individuals have important social and cultural needs. This, and similar criticisms, led to the development of the concept of relative poverty. Relative poverty, as the UNDP Human Development Report (1997) also notes, defines poverty in relation to the economic status of other members of the society. For example people are poor if they fall below prevailing standards of living in a given societal context. A fundamental criticism of these definitions is that it mainly focuses on income and consumption.

The UNDP Human Development Report (1997:16) also illustrate that this type of narrow definition of poverty has largely led to the emergence of the concept of social exclusion. This has contributed significantly towards including multi-faceted indicators of ill-being into the conceptual understanding of poverty. To develop further the definition of the concept of relative poverty or relative deprivation, three perspectives are relevant here, drawn from the Human Development Report in 1997: the income perspective indicates that a person is poor only if his or her income is below the country's poverty line (defined in terms of having income sufficient for a specified amount of food); the basic needs perspective goes beyond the income perspective to include the need for the provision by a community of the basic social services necessary to prevent individuals from falling into poverty; and finally, the capability (or empowerment) perspective suggests that poverty signifies a lack of some basic capability to function.

Today it is widely held that one cannot consider only the economic side of poverty (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/poverty/>). Poverty is also social, political and cultural. Moreover, according to UNESCO, it is considered to undermine human rights - economic (the right to work and have an adequate income), social (access to health care and education), political (freedom of thought, expression and association) and cultural (the right to maintain one's cultural identity and be involved in a community's cultural life). Therefore, poverty is a

major obstacle that affects human security. For example, lack of access to education and health affect the goal of human security. The ability to fulfil one's basic needs facilitates the power of individuals to choose among different opportunities and ensures that the conditions needed for the health and well-being of the community as a whole, by promoting the acquisition of knowledge and adequate preparation for life, are met (Periago, 2012). Of the world's 6.6 billion people, 5.3 billion are found in Less Developed Countries (LDCs) where 3 billion of them live on less than \$2 per day (UNESCOSOC in Nishimuko, 2008). Poverty, Nishimuko argues, is a multi-dimensional problem, involving social, economic, and political issues which are linked inter alia to hunger, ill health, inequality, political and economic instability, and conflicts.

In many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of good governance and democracy, along with weak political institutions and ineffective policies, are major problems which have hindered national development in the areas of health and education (Nishimuko, 2008). The continued existence of these problems is in part due to the fact that so many people are either lacking education because some parents cannot afford to send their children to school or they have no power to influence policy formulation and implementation by the government. The failure of education and health care policies to lift people out of poverty is not simply a problem in an otherwise benevolent system, but is a result of the inequalities built into society and the education and health care system alike (Raffo et al., 2007). This makes critical theory framework very useful in understanding such problems, particularly in showing how human insecurities are produced in a society and why the goals of human security are not being achieved. Raffo et al. (2007) argue that, if better educational and health care benefits are indeed to be realised a form of education and health care delivery system is needed which is critical of existing arrangements, and which can both challenge existing power structures, and enable the existence of democratic dispensation in the way in which policies are formulated and implemented. The next section provides a brief account of neo-liberalism to explain it meaning.

1.4 Neo-liberalism

Domestic policy reforms in the education and health care sector in many countries are now compelled to take into account the global factors that are influencing their design and implementation (Morales-Gomez & Torres, ed., 1995). One such factor is the neo-liberal strategy shaping the world order in the 21st century, and this strategy has been promoted by international agencies such as the World Bank, IMF, OECD, Donor Agencies, think-tank

organisations, and academics. The reforms have been driven both by the need for greater efficiency and by calls for increases in choice and participation to ensure competition. This is seen in the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in Services (GATTS) which forces competition upon member national governments provision of public services (http://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/26-gats.pdf). The main logic behind the reform is that increased choices (between public and private institutions) in providing education and health services could lead to more competition, and this in turn could lead to the provision of better quality services. The main components of the reforms have been deregulation, privatisation, decentralisation, increased user-fees, the introduction of different forms of health insurance, and a reduced central government control. The reforms have led to the increased commodification in the provision of education and health care services (Bond & Dor, 2003), making people vulnerable to forces over which they have no control. This view is also supported by Willis & Khan (2009:992), who argue that, the provision of education and health care is increasingly being incorporated into the logic of the market, where it is viewed as a 'commodity' to be bought and sold, rather than a service, which is provided to individuals as citizens of a nation-state. There is no doubt that while the aim of providers is to make profit, the need to expand access and to improve the quality of education and health care delivery still remain a contentious issue.

According to Rose (2005:7), it is evident that international agencies, which supported the move towards democracy in many countries, followed this with pressure for the inclusion of privatisation, decentralisation, and a reduction in government expenditure on education and health as priorities within national policies. Crucially, this was not a response to local demand by citizens but was promoted in a top-down fashion by international agencies (Ellis et al., 2003; Rose, 2003b), and it is a matter in which this study is mainly concerned. The argument put forward by the international agencies is that, privatisation, deregulation and decentralisation was in part a response to government inability to cope with the problems faced by the education and health care sector. Given the fact that the Sierra Leone Government is heavily dependent on donor resources to support the provision of education and health care, it had no choice but to implement these reforms. For example net Official Development Assistance (ODA) was estimated at 24.9% of the country's GNI in 2010 (OECD, 2012).

Neo-liberals argue that privatisation is a means of improving efficiency and cost-effectiveness, but this has involved: user-fees, cost-recovery, private health insurance, and public-private partnerships as the means of delivering education and health care services.

Neo-liberals are of the view that private market for education and health emerges wherein there is as much education and health care services demand for those who can afford to pay for it. Decentralisation, on the other hand, supports the goals of efficiency and cost-effectiveness through improved accountability and participation of local people in decision-making (Rose, 2003a). The World Bank's view for a more decentralised form of management, as Rose says, can improve service delivery thereby leading to the provision of quality education and health care (ibid.). The World Bank (1999, 2002) argues that public-private partnerships are becoming more common, and that they tend to free up public resources for targeting the poor, as well as ensuring a more careful monitoring of the quality of education and health care. It is apparent that, cost-effectiveness promoted by competition continues to be a key motivation for the development of the private sector, with the rhetoric of 'partnerships' giving the privatisation agenda a more acceptable and populist image (Rose, 2005). Although there are evidence which demonstrates that decentralisation and privatisation translate into the delivery of better quality education and health care benefits. For example, private-sector education in poor countries routinely out-performs the free, taxpayer-subsidised version (The Economist, 2010). In practice, however, its effect on people with low income remains a major concern, as the comment of one of the interviewed participants reads:

“A major concern for me about the privatisation policy in education and health is that, it is excluding brighter students from poorer backgrounds in accessing private schools and private hospitals and clinics because of its exorbitant charges. As many people in Sierra Leone are poor and without employment, the ability to pay such high charges therefore prohibits many people in accessing private schools and hospitals as public schools and hospitals are ill-equipped and quality of services is in most cases poor. The establishment of a regulatory framework that addresses excessive charges and other concerns, especially those relating to people with low income will be a step in the right direction to make this policy effective” (Freetown, 10/01/2011).

McGregor (2001) described the globalisation of the neo-liberal paradigm as pervasive and all-encompassing, and this paradigm has been widespread throughout least developed and post-conflict countries over the last three decades. The theoretical assumption of neo-liberalism is that the free functioning of market forces leads to better utilisation and allocation of resources, guarantees a better satisfaction of the requirement of consumption, and increases foreign trade (McGregor, 2001). This, he said, will achieve higher economic

growth and lead to better development. It is therefore a form of governance that encourages institutions and individuals to conform to the rules of the market place (Peou ed., 2009).

Neo-liberals have also argued that ensuring a free market through decentralisation, liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation of public and state-owned enterprises, such as schools and health care services, is necessary to ensure economic growth, innovation, competition, free trade, respect for contracts and ownership of property (McGregor, 2001:4). Enterprises run by the government are viewed as unacceptable interventions in the economy because the state is seen as part of the problem rather than part of the solution (ibid.). This is because bureaucrats do not need to make a profit and are therefore lazy and inefficient. This shift in the relationship between state institutions, citizens, and private sector organisations is at the heart of neo-liberalisation (Willis & Khan, 2009). While the rate of economic growth in Sierra Leone had consistently increased over the years, 6% in 2011, 15.2% in 2012 and 17% in 2013 for example (<http://data.worldbank.org/country/sierra-leone>), this has not translated into better access to education and health care for a broad spectrum of the population. This remains a major concern for achieving human security. As Wilkin argues, these developments have been extremely harmful for the prospects of attaining human security not only in terms of the satisfaction of human needs but also in terms of the meaningful participation of citizens in the political, economic, and cultural processes that structure their daily life (2001:20).

1.5 Human Security Crisis in Sierra Leone

According to Springer the concept of human security resonated as a response to the problems societies face due to severe developmental failures (in Peou, ed., 2009). For example, the health crisis in Sierra Leone because of the awful scourge, Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), which has claimed the lives of so many people not only in Sierra Leone but also in the sub-regions. One of the key reasons why the government was unable to contain the epidemic was because of its failure to prioritise and invest in the public health system. So the health system was very weak and does not have the capacity to handle the unprecedented scale of the disease. Hence, developmental failures could result from many things, such as the implementation of inappropriate policies, the accumulation of debt through wide-spread corruption, and the mismanagement of state resources, which could have been used to further improve human security. Therefore, Kanti Bajpai stated that “the genealogy of the idea of human security can be related to, if not traced back to, the growing dissatisfaction with prevailing notions of development and security in the 60s, 70s and 80s (in Venu Menon,

2007). Thus, human security is viewed as a wide-ranging concept that demonstrates the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of human beings, as well as their potential (Aravena, 2002). These problems have undoubtedly put Sierra Leone under the microscope of the international community, including the IMF and World Bank, and both local and international non-governmental organisations. This has led to the introduction of the neo-liberal agenda and has also profoundly changed the way in which policies are formulated and implemented in the country. By adopting external policies from international institutions instead of formulating policies through a more open and democratic means, such policies tend to be incompatible with national priorities. The main reason why the government adopted such external policies is because of its dependence on external actors for aids, loans, and financial support. As reported by the BBC news (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/newsnight/6231905.stm>), Sierra Leone is heavily dependent on foreign aid, particularly from the UK - with over 60% of its budget supplied from abroad.

Therefore, the undemocratic nature and process in which the neo-liberal policies have been developed and exported to Sierra Leone raise very important questions. For example, in whose interest are these policies implemented and why are they implemented? When policy is formulated in Sierra Leone there is a lack of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, such as local people and civil society organisations. Neo-liberal policies, even in their most re-modified form as a poverty reduction strategy programme (PRSP), also shows that the majority of citizens, including those elected in offices to serve their constituencies, have been excluded from the process of policy formulation and implementation. As Arce (2006) argues the adoption of the neo-liberal reforms and the pervasive social atomisation resulting from marketisation, have placed societal actors in the role of "passive recipients" of state initiatives, incapable of contesting or modifying the implementation of market reforms. Willis & Khan (2009:991) describe this tendency on the ways in which policies are formulated and implemented through the actions of individuals and institutions as key in both describing and explaining how 'global' processes are created and how this affects the goal of achieving human security.

Abbound (2009) argues that three economic assumptions underpinned the justifications for the adoption of neo-liberal reforms in least developed and post-conflict countries: first, there was the assumption that public ownership of the economy and central planning stifled private sector activity and led to misallocation of resources; second, it was assumed that the public sector was corrupt and inefficient and that privatisation and decentralisation, as an approach

to good governance, were needed to enhance economic productivity and to facilitate the allocation of resources; and third, it was also assumed that a country's economy requires foreign capital investments, and that skills and technology could only be acquired through liberalisation of the economy and the creation of regulatory environment attractive for investment. It was within this framework that neo-liberal reform was introduced in many least developed countries, including Sierra Leone, and these claims will be examined later in the thesis.

In addition to the economic assumptions discussed above, McMichael (1996:135) also underscored the significance of the mechanism of the debt era in most developing nations including Sierra Leone, as the turning point in the history of their development (development in reverse or de-development), and this has further consolidated the institutionalisation of power and authority of global management within states' organisation and procedures. It is obvious that this situation has significantly affected the delivery of better education and health care services in Sierra Leone. For example the BBC news (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/newsnight/6231905.stm>) noted that the largely privatised education and health care system is beyond most people's means, forcing them to seek alternatives. This means, potentially, seeking dangerous health care and sending children to inferior school. This situation has affected both the economic and social development in the country and hence exacerbates human security.

The thesis therefore argues that the government's adoption of neo-liberal policies is now widely seen as an "acceptable and satisfactory approach" to policy and decision-making. As a result, national governments, thanks to their huge budget deficit and debts, are being controlled and obliged to implement neo-liberal policies and practices that are, in many cases, not compatible with their national priorities and development goals. This "acceptable and satisfactory approach" in formulating and implementing policies in Sierra Leone poses a major challenge in addressing human security concerns.

Some basic minimum services such as health care, education, and clean drinking-water are crucial aspects of a healthy life, and reasonable access to such services constitutes an integral part of human security (Mukherjee et al., 2010). For instance, they argue that access to safe drinking-water does not only reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases, but also indirectly reduces costs of treatment from water-borne diseases. It also helps to maintain better health and better working capacity. Primary school education helps towards better human security by contributing towards development of faculties, better understanding,

comprehension, independence, and knowledge-building (Mukherjee et al., 2010). Solt & Huber (2004) argue that, improvement of the human capital base requires not only higher investment in primary health care and education, but also a broader attack on poverty and inequality. Human insecurity results directly from existing structures of power that determine who enjoys the entitlement to security and who does not (Thomas, 2001). Such structures, Thomas claimed, can be identified at several levels, ranging through the global, regional, state, and local levels.

As inequality sharpens under neo-liberalism, citizens are more likely to express dismay with particular characteristics of it, chiefly the privatisation of essential social provisions such as education and health care (Peou, ed., 2009). The recent protest in Brazil resulted from a combination of factors such as the sluggish growth of the economy, high inflation, inequality, and the huge cost of hosting both the World Cup and the Olympic. This was money that could have been spent on improving education, health care and other social services. As Gary Duffy explained, the objectives of the demonstrators were very broad, but key among these was a demand for better education and health services (BBC News Sao Paulo, 21/06/2013). In Chile, schools and university students as well as teachers have been boycotting classes and holding demonstrations for over five months to demand more money for state education and an end to profit-making in the sector (BBC News, 10/10/2011). These episodes have made Poeu (ed., 2009) to conclude that recourse to violence becomes one of the few options available to ordinary people in challenging the neo-liberal agenda and a government weakened by the introduction of the reforms as it attempts to retain its legitimacy. The neo-liberal reform represents a significant departure from the earlier embedded liberalism of the post-WWII period. Other scholars have argued that it has further been removed from a critical alternative model of development policy that places human security at the centre of human development. Hence, this thesis places education and health care at the centre of development policy in order to achieve the goal of human security.

1.6 Neo-liberalism and Education

Many educational theorists, from Dewey (1902) to Hargreaves (2003), have placed the public education system within the broader social-political and economic context (in Petten, 2012). The common theme that emerged from the various theories of education put forward by Petten is that an educational system is meant to prepare young people for the challenges and opportunities of an economically adult life. The influence of the private sector is increasingly being felt within the public educational system (Jones & Bird, 2000).

Educational policies in Sierra Leone and in other countries around the world have been strongly influenced by market-based reforms that neo-liberals argue could achieve accountability, high-stakes testing, data-driven decision-making, charter schools, deregulation, and competition among schools (Dudley-Marling et al., 2012). The old-fashioned private sector is managed by private individuals with marginal control by the state and for the aim of making profit. While the public sector is guarded by the government for the objective of providing social goods and services for the welfare of citizens.

According to Ball & Youdell (2008), the market form constitutes a new moral environment for both consumers (parents and students) and producers (teachers). Advocates for market-based school reform argue that children, who have not been well served in traditional public school settings, including students with disabilities, are especially likely to benefit from school choice (McGroarty, 2001). Similarly, Anastasiou and Kaufman (2009) also argue that advocates of free-market schooling believe that "market-oriented social practices should produce a surplus of special education providers, beyond state-run schools, to address the needs of parents, who are seen as the 'consumers' of schooling" (p. 210). While McGroarty's view about market-based school reform is accepted, he actually failed to focus on who actually benefits from the school choice. This thesis contends that those who have the ability to pay are the beneficiaries of school choice. In the case of Sierra Leone, the better schools are the private ones and not all children could choose to study in these institutions. This is because they or their parent lack the finance and therefore could not afford to go to the school of their choice. Because of their poor academic performance in inferior schools, they also could not meet the requirement to go to the school of their choice. It is argued that the government should invest and develop state or public schools to create a more competitive environment and co-exist with private institutions.

Presumably, neo-liberals saw markets as necessarily responding to potential "customers" in need of particular services, in this case educational services targeted to students. This means "privatisation, deregulation and decentralisation ... are seen to eliminate bureaucratic red tape and tend to increase efficiency and productivity, to improve quality, and to reduce costs ... through cheaper commodities and services and indirectly through reduction of the tax burden" (Harvey, 2005, p. 65). This economic principle, as Hills put it, "outweighs any social cost resulting from reduced government services" (Hill, 2007), since it is assumed that the free-market, not the state, works best to satisfy the needs of individuals (Harvey, 2005). This move towards market-based schooling has stimulated a significant body of criticism which has argued that, in the main, unfettered free-markets governing economic, social, and

educational affairs have exacerbated existing inequalities in societies where these policies have been implemented (e.g. Apple, 1996, 2000; Harvey, 2005; Howe & Welner, 2005; Hursh, 2007a, 2007b, 2008).

1.7 Neo-liberalism and Health Care

Providing good health care to all citizens is also often considered one of the three pillars of social policy, along with education and social welfare/income security (Brooks, 1998). In general, McGregor (2001) explains that health care policy is comprised of a government's decisions affecting cost, delivery, quality, accessibility and evaluation of programs, traditionally funded through taxation, designed to enhance the physical well-being of all members of the population, with special focus on children, elderly, and women. Neo-liberals, McGregor says, believe that the welfare of a consumer (the population) in a health care system relates to issues such as safety, choice (on cost, availability, accessibility, and quality of services), information, redress, having a voice, and health education. The main delivery method in a public health system are through health care centres, hospitals, health care professionals, and funded by tax payers money. Modern reform of health care systems suggests several modes of providing health services, and primarily, this has led to the introduction of the free-market system that focus on making profit.

Willis & Khan (2009) have attributed the growing commodification of health care as a reflection of a number of interlocking processes: first, the inability of national governments to provide sufficient funding to the health sector, particularly in the context of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) or the more recent Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSPs); second, the view that state health care provision is usually inefficient, both in terms of resource capacity and in providing good services to patients; and third, the growing discourse of patients as consumers, linked to neo-liberal ideas around individualisation and the importance of individual choice in allowing people to improve their own life chances. Advocates of the reform argue that it has led to a conviction in the market as a fair and proficient model in providing health care services.

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone (MoHS-SL) presently operates a National Health Sector Strategic Plan (NHSSP) that is guiding the delivery of health care from 2010 to 2015, and has incorporated key neo-liberal policies. The development of this plan the Ministry says, culminated from continuous update to recent health policy documents such as the National Health Policy (2002), the Local Government Act (2004) and the Agenda

for Change (2008), also known as Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP II). The NHSSP mirrors the government's view that *"health is a basic human right, and therefore health services should be made available, accessible and affordable to all people without discrimination."* It further reflects the idea that health profoundly impacts individual output and is therefore a significant contribution for the long-term development of the country and in achieving the goal of human security. In addition to the usual policies of decentralisation, privatisation, introduction of user-fees and a reduction in the health budget in particular, the plan has also introduced what is known as the "Basic Package of Essential Health Services (BPEHS)" for Primary Health Care (PHC) and hospitals in the health system. It defines key interventions that the public health system should provide within the available resources. Although this was meant to address the needs of the poorest people in the country, it only provides a basket of basic health services that includes childhood inoculations and information about common diseases such as malaria. I agree with Willis and Khan (2009) that the introduction of such a basic package illustrates how market-driven health care excludes large sections of the population from accessing services which are not included in the package because of their income status.

The lack of financial resources allocated to the health system and the excessive charges in accessing health services in Sierra Leone are contributing factors in the poor utilisation of health services. According to World Bank Data (2011), 52.9% of the population are considered poor, and hence this represents a major problem in achieving the goal of human security. For example, Cuba is one of the few countries in the world where government spending as a percentage of total health expenditure reflects state commitment to health provision for the entire population (Willis & Khan, 2009). While there are private health care insurance schemes operating in Sierra Leone, the government is considering setting up a National Social Health Insurance (NSHI) Scheme that could include economically poorer or informally-employed individuals to address the issues of access and affordability of quality health care service to all its citizens. The big question though is how such a scheme will be financed? According to Willis & Khan (2009), evidence suggests that the provision of such insurance schemes inevitably leaves out a significant proportion of the rural population who are not public sector employees. More broadly, while such health insurance schemes are being advocated as a viable alternative to user-fees in developing countries, Willis & Khan are correct in believing that it also excludes the majority of the people in accessing such services.

User-fees also known as charges as part of the neo-liberal reform constitute by far “the greatest obstacle to progress” on the path to universal access (Sierra Leone National Health Action Plan, 2002). For example, the impact of user-fees in the health sector in Sierra Leone before the introduction of the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) for pregnant women and children illustrates that 88% of citizens said that their inability to pay was by far the greatest barrier to accessing health care when sick (UNICEF Report, 2011). A year after the inception of the introduction of FHCI, data collected by the health information system demonstrates that medical care for children under five has increased by 214% and the proportion of children getting approved treatment for diagnosed malaria has increased from 51% to 90% (UNICEF Report, 2011). While for pregnant women, the same report reveals that deliveries in formal clinics and hospitals have increased by 45% and uptake of modern family planning methods went up 140%. More importantly, the report also indicated that the number of delivery complications treated in health units increased by 150% and the fatality rate in these cases has fallen by 61%. This clearly demonstrates that more women in need of emergency obstetric care and their children are now accessing the health services they need earlier without contemplating the cost and this is making a difference. However, it is also worth noting that the sustainability of the FHCI remains a major concern. Who will continue to finance this project? Is it the government of Sierra Leone or the international community? Willis & Khan (2009) therefore argue that as user-fees rise, without appropriate safety-nets for the poorest and most marginalised people in society, such a neo-liberal health policy will exacerbate inequalities within what is already the most income-unequal region of the world.

The process of decentralisation has also been carried out together with the other reforms discussed above, including the trial of giving hospitals the independence they need. With the devolution of health services to the districts, the core functions of the MoHS-SL now remain as "policy formulation, standards setting and quality assurance, resource mobilisation, capacity development and technical support, provision of nationally coordinated services, (e.g. epidemic control; co-ordination of health services), monitoring and evaluation of the overall sector performance and training (MoHS-SL)." The trend towards decentralisation within the health system has been driven by donors and international organisations as a key strategy for good governance and as a pragmatic response combined with neo-liberal economic policies to encourage international health care reform since the 1980s (Willis & Khan, 2009).

Willis & Khan (2009) also explained that the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in providing health care services has also grown significantly as a response both to

the withdrawal of the state from formal provision, and to the growth of large donors within the health sector who channel funds through national and local NGOs as well as through national governments. They argue that the importance of NGOs is interpreted as increasing the potential for democratisation and participation of local service users, despite evidence suggesting that NGOs are not inherently participatory and often reinforce existing inequalities at a community level. Therefore, despite the fact that the health sector reform is disseminated by the catchphrase of 'Health for All', the words and texts used in health policies undoubtedly resonates within a neo-liberal perspective. Hence, access to health care services is limited by income status, leading to inequalities between rural and urban areas, between class-groups in towns and cities, by gender and between ethnic groups (Willis & Khan, 2009). Providing access to good health care to a population represent a key goal in achieving human security.

1.8 Statement of the Problem

The neo-liberal reforms, primarily driven by the international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF, as a global development strategy, is widely seen as the best development approach for developing countries to improve their education and health system. The large amount of debts accrued by many developing countries, including Sierra Leone, and those countries emerging from civil conflicts, have made it very difficult for Governments to effectively develop locally-owned education and health policies. As a result, international institutions have seized on this opportunity to advance their own interest. They have done this by imposing neo-liberal policies, specifically privatisation and decentralisation policies as conditions for loans, debt relief, and aid.

While many studies have shown that these reforms have caused increased inequality, poverty and suffering for many people. There are significant parts of these reforms which needs to be examined further within the context of Sierra Leone and the wider geo-political economy in the development of education and health care policies. For example, understanding the reforms as a form of power/knowledge, ideology and governance would enable us to make sense of the hidden power relations in the way in which knowledge/policy is constituted, and its effects of achieving the goal of human security. Two major reforms were introduced after the civil conflict in 2002, namely: privatisation and decentralisation. More importantly, the human security concept has been widely used by those working in emergencies, humanitarian affairs, and state security. Not many studies have linked neo-liberal reforms to the idea of human security. Hence, this study is an attempt to address this gap.

In this process, it is argued that the neo-liberal reforms have not been successful in achieving the goal of human security in Sierra Leone. Therefore, the case is made to: first, strengthen citizens' and other local actors' voices in governance in order to develop effective local policies that are compatible with national priorities instead of being imposed from outside; and second, government intervention and commitment is needed to improve public schools and health care institutions in order to make them more competitive and co-exist with their private counterparts in delivering education and health care services. The effects of the reforms have been measured by focusing on the following key policy objectives: accessibility, affordability, equality, quality of service delivery, and citizens' participation in policy and decision-making.

1.9 Research Questions

The overarching research question of this study is to examine to what extent the current neo-liberal reforms have been successful in inhibiting or achieving the goal of human security in Sierra Leone, particularly in education and health care. This means investigating whether the policies that constitute the neo-liberal reforms are adequate to achieve the objectives of human security in Sierra Leone. Hence, the following supplementary questions were examined:

- 1) What was the process by which the neo-liberal reforms were introduced?
- 2) How successful were the reforms in improving education security in Sierra Leone?
- 3) How successful were the reforms in improving health security in Sierra Leone?
- 4) To what extent can the two, neo-liberal reforms and human security, be seen as complementary in achieving the objectives of human security?

1.10 Potential Statement of Significance of the Study

Providing equal access to and quality education and health services is at the heart of the human security. As a result, the study is significant for three reasons. First, is to contribute to the transformation of education and health care policy in Sierra Leone, which has received inadequate attention even after the conflict of 1991-2002. It is known that international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF, influences the way in which education and health policies are developed and implemented in a post-conflict country. The need to understand the effects of these policies on the population allows us to put forward an alternative approach that could encourage government to advance evidence-informed

policies and programmes aimed at improving the quality of education and delivery of health care services.

Second, this study is also significant because of its ability to unravel the power relation which exists in the interaction between the citizens, government, and international institutions, as they partake in the development of policies in the country (Sierra Leone). An understanding of such processes outside the rhetoric of education and health policies imposed by the international institutions can offer practical lessons to government, policy-makers, and education and health consultants.

Third, the study shift away from a direct and simplistic computation of human development that is based on GDP per capita to a measure of development that considers access to education and health as very important human security goal and useful in reducing poverty and improving living standards. It is hoped that the findings of this study would be of immense significance to the developmental needs of an ailing society in order to improve basic human needs.

1.11 Structure of the Thesis

The remaining chapters in this thesis proceed as follows. Chapter 2 presents the philosophical and methodological orientation of the research. It set out the research methodology, data collection methods and how the data was analysed to answer the research questions. Chapter 3 examines critical theory, the theoretical framework which guides the analysis in this study. In Chapter 4, the study discusses the political practices and human security in Sierra Leone. Chapter 5 looks at neo-liberalism as a global development strategy and reviews existing literature. In Chapter 6, the study sets out human security as an alternative to neo-liberalism. Chapter 7 examines education, development and human security in Sierra Leone up until the end of the civil conflict in 2002. Chapter 8 deliberates the neo-liberal education reforms after the war in 2002. Thereafter, Chapter 9 explores health, development and human security in Sierra Leone up until the end of the civil conflict in 2002; Chapter 10 analyses the neo-liberal health reforms implemented in Sierra Leone after the conflict. Chapters 11 and 12 set out a critical evaluation of the reforms in education and health, and finally, Chapter 13 deals with the conclusions of the study.

Chapter 2

Philosophical and Methodological Orientation of the Research

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the philosophy, general principle and methodological orientation of this study. It discusses the research methodology and data collection methods that was used to collect and analyse all the data, in order to investigate the research questions. It is important because it explains the methodology employed in the study to critically evaluate the effects of the reforms on the population of Sierra Leone. The study makes the case that access to better and quality education and health care are very important human development goals, which not only enhances human security, but are also vital for a nation's development. Therefore, the chapter is structured as follows: it sets out the debate over the choice of research method, provides a summary of the research design, discusses the study method (case-study) and the methods used in collecting and analysing the data, and it concludes by highlighting the limitations in the use of this methodology.

2.2 Debate Over the Choice of Research Methodology

The debate encompassing social research methodology and the notion of how an investigation should proceed is still a very contentious issue. Dawson (2009) has argued that much of this argument is centred on the subject of qualitative versus quantitative study. According to Wallerstien (1999) as societal challenges widen in perspective and scope, the relation between disciplines has merged. They argue that these disciplines have adopted each other's fields of study as well as each other's methodologies. As a result there have always been fierce conflicts between the use of qualitative and quantitative methods in conducting research and the analysis of data. This means choosing between the two, or using both (mixed method) will always be based in ontological (reality) and epistemological (alleged association with knowledge) perspectives. The use of methodology therefore cannot be detached from its theoretical conventions. Morrow & Brown (1994:37) refers to methods more specifically as individual techniques (e.g., surveys, participant observation) and methodology, an overall strategy of constructing specific types of knowledge. They described methodology as prescriptive because of its attempts to legitimate the use of particular methods in ways that are consistent with the development of the specific theory in question. While ontology and epistemology are mirrored in the real practice of a study, qualitative and quantitative methodology however, work as two contrasting technical strategies on how to examine a phenomenon. This study has employed qualitative research

methodology (because of its interpretive approach) through the lens of critical theory. There are two reasons for this: first, critical theory serves as a framework because of its usefulness in understanding the concept of power/knowledge, ideology and governance which this study focuses upon. It enable us to make sense of the hidden power relations in the way knowledge is constituted, thus produces different lenses through which to understand social reality, lenses that make society and it phenomenon understandable. Second, critical theory also comes as a way of critiquing quantitative methodology because measuring social relations is fundamentally challenging. Morrow & Brown further argue that, although critical theory cannot be defined exclusively in terms of a specific method, it does suggest a distinct methodological strategy and a unique research programme. Both qualitative methodology and critical theory, as Fossey et al., (2002) argue, place emphasis on seeking to understand the meanings of human actions and experiences, and on generating accounts of their meaning from the viewpoints of those involved, that is, the subjective experiences described by separate individuals. The next section will discuss the meaning of qualitative methodology, explain the interpretive approach, and then go on to examine it strengths and weaknesses.

2.2.1 Qualitative Research Method

Each and every methodology has its specific strengths and weaknesses. According to Strauss & Corbin (1990) qualitative research describes and explains participants' experiences, behaviours, interactions and social contexts without making use of statistical procedures or quantification. Brantlinger et al. (2005) defined qualitative research as a systematic approach to understanding the qualities or the essential nature of a phenomenon within a particular context that can make policy and practice effective. Qualitative research aims to give advantage to the opinions of research participants and to 'illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and context of those being researched' (cf. Fossey et al., 2002). Thus, from these definitions, Fossey et al. argued that central to the eminence of qualitative research is: whether participants' viewpoints have been authentically represented in the research process, and correct interpretations made from information gathered (authenticity); and whether the findings are coherent in the sense that they 'fit' the data and social context from which they were derived. This makes qualitative research methods appropriate for this study. Fossey et al. (2002) also posit that the importance of power relations between the researcher and researched, and the need for transparency (openness and honesty) of data collection, analysis, and presentation implied in the use of qualitative research, highlight the extent to which the criteria for quality, profoundly interact with standards for ethics in qualitative research.

The findings of qualitative research is significant and valuable because it draws on participants' understanding. While qualitative method provides a 'comprehensive' study of a social event, Wacheux (1996) examined three premises and this forms the basis of using qualitative method in a research: a) all the characteristics, significance and values of the entire social fact need to be taken into consideration; b) when realising a project, the researcher is faced with a double duality (between the object and the participants); and c) the aim continues to be that of producing an emergent theory. The process is inductive, which means leading from data collection and coding, concept creation, category formation, and eventually to the formation of a theory (Alasuutari, 2010:145). In addition to the above, the following arguments also explain the reasons why I have chosen qualitative research in this study.

First, qualitative research is appropriate because of its familiarity and understanding of real people in real situations, and its knowledge of humans in their day-to-day lives (Georing et al., 2008). This approach also allows the researcher to describe, analyse, and to explain the intricacy of the way in which neo-liberal policies were developed and implemented and also to be familiar with the participants that are involved (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Second, qualitative research also takes an explanatory method connecting exclusively to a position as one sees it. This means it is concerned with understanding the subjective views and understandings of research participants of a particular study. Therefore, I agree with Bryman (2008) that the emphasis is on uncovering these different viewpoints in order to highlight a particular issue without, necessarily, providing us with a specific quantification or solution. For example as illustrated by Fossey et al. (2002:720), interpretive methodologies focus primarily in understanding and accounting for the meaning of human experiences and actions and on providing accounts of their meaning from the perspectives of those involved. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) also agree with Fossey et al. that the qualitative approach seeks to provide an understanding from the participant's standpoint.

Third, Duffy (1986) states that the usefulness of qualitative research lies in the fact that it has an holistic focus, allowing for flexibility and the attainment of a deeper, more valid knowledge of the participants than could be achieved through a more rigid approach. It also allows participants to advance concerns and themes which the researcher might not have included in a well-thought-out research design, thus enhancing the superiority in data gathered. Objectivity in the entire process is central in order to understand the facts. This means the researcher should remain impartial and do not in any way influence the

participants' response. He maintains that the strength of such an objective approach is to avoid any suggestion that any possible bias of the research could taint the study. According to Carr (1994), this adds understanding to the field of study.

Fourth, according to Gillham (2004:10) qualitative research illuminates issues and turn up possible explanations, essentially a search for meaning rather than correlations or even causation. It epitomises an important aim of critical theory which will be discussed in the next section. In addition to the other arguments indicated above, Gillham identified five characteristics and stated that, they represent a very strong argument in using qualitative method to find answer to some questions in some settings: (1) qualitative method enables researchers to carry out an investigation where other methods are either not practicable and not ethically justifiable; (2) enable situations where little is known about a particular subject to be investigated; (3) explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more controlled approaches, to "get under the skin" of a group or organisation to find out what really happens; (4) view the case from the inside, to see it from the viewpoint of those involved; and (5) above all to carry out research into the processes leading to meaningful and useful results.

2.2.2 Critical Theory Method

Critical theory is a qualitative methodology and hence comes as a way of critiquing quantitative methods (it has strong anti-positivist and revealing approach to social science). I will discuss this in detail in Chapter 3. Quantifying social relations is inherently problematic as it treat the social world just like the natural world. It is difficult to study social relations this way since there are all kind of complicated phenomena at work which has to do with power, emotions, motivations and ideology. These are things which are difficult to quantify, so critical theory gives us another technique of drawing out the complexity of these relations to understand what is happening in Sierra Leone. According to Gelo et al. (2008) most research has been dominated by positivist/post-positivist paradigm. They stated that criticism about this way of conducting research during the past few decades has emerged. For instance, the positivist view about social research is that any form of investigation is a way to employ the techniques of the natural sciences in the research process. However, Morrow & Brown (1994:9) argue that the study of the empirical character of societies differs in at least two basic ways from the natural sciences: first, "social facts" are qualitatively different from the facts of nature because they are created and re-created by our own actions as human beings (see Giddens, 1982b:13-14); and second, because we create society, the

application of Sociology or Social Science is not really analogous to controlling physical nature. From these points of view, critical theory charges that the failure of out-dated humanistic methods rests in their negligence of such strategies of study. Critical theory rebuffs the opinion that science can be significantly utilised as a way to regulate nature/society in favour of particular social groups. It therefore embraces a humanistic approach, and as Morrow & Brown said, that has to do with the study of meaning, power and knowledge claims which underpin ideological application of scientific ideas, which in practice, serve to justify and sustains forms of oppressions. Hence, critical theory is useful to this study because of what it reveals about the philosophical beliefs underpinning neo-liberal claims to be a science of economy and society. Critical theory has a more unambiguous focus on the fundamental subject of domination. Morrow & Brown (1994:10) argue that it is concerned with the manner social relations also conflict with power relations resulting in various forms of alienation that inhibit the realisation of human security. As Fossey et al. (2002) explains critical theory emphasises the social, historical origins and contexts of meanings, regardless of the individual or collective forms of embodiment and expression they might take. They contend that critical theory is derived from socio-political and emancipatory traditions, in which knowledge is not seen as discovered by objective inquiry but is acquired through critical discourse and debate. This also supports the interpretive approach which I have discussed above and represents the basis for using qualitative research.

Critical theory is derived from the term “critique” meaning negative evaluation. As Morrow & Brown (1994:7) stated, the critique aspect of critical theory is concern with the following three fundamental aspects: 1) unveiling ideological mystification in social relations; 2) methodological, given a concern with critique involving establishing the presuppositions of approaches to the nature of reality, knowledge, and explanation; 3) self-reflectivity of the researcher and the linguistic basis of representation. Hence, understanding the opinions of the participants represent the basis of developing a new theory. While for Denzin & Lincoln (1994) critical theory focuses on the critique and transformation of current structures, relationships, and conditions that shape and constrain the development of social practices in education and health, by examining them within their historical, social, cultural and political contexts. Consequently, they argue also that critical theory is directed not towards understanding for its own sake, but towards understanding as a tool to be used in the on-going process of the practical transformation of society. The consequence for methodologies that engages a critical theory approach is that it aims to foster self-reflection, mutual learning,

participation and empowerment, rather than the acceptance of discoveries. Hence, as Alasuutari (2010) stated critical theory applies a different lens on social reality, a lens that makes society and its phenomena understandable. It is instrumental and suitable for the investigation of individual and group independent practices.

In summary then, this study takes a qualitative approach through the lens of critical theory in order to investigate the research questions. Both methodologies are particularly appropriate because they tend to reveal the reality of things and expose unfair treatment meted out to ordinary people. They do this by examining and making obvious the nature of the social relations which underpin forms of repression (sexism, racism, inequality and so on). These social relations can be material (for example, the policy outcomes chosen by the state with regards to health and education) and also ideational (the power of knowledge as ideology to structure debates and discourses in society that spread notions reinforcing forms of oppression – neo-liberalism as a discourse can be seen to serve such a purpose).

Below is a table showing a summary of the methodological orientation of the research, and each element in the table will be discussed in the remaining part of this chapter.

Table 2.0: Summary of Methodological Orientation of the Research

Summary of methodological orientation of the research	
Methodological Framework	Description
Research Method	Qualitative and Critical Theory
Approach	Inductive, exploratory and data-driven
Study Method	Case Study (through field work)
Sampling Strategy	Purposeful (using snowball sampling strategy)
Ethical Consideration	Ensure data integrity through:
	1) Obtaining permission from all Participants
	2) Non disclosure, anonymity & exchange of information/confidentiality
	3) Clearance from Brunel University ethics committee
Data Collection Methods	Primary data through:
	1) Semi-structured interviews (open-ended)
	2) Focus group discussion (6-7 participants for each group)
	Secondary data through:
	1) comprehensive literature review
	2) Official policy documents, reports and articles from various databases
Credibility Measures	3) Reflective field notes
	Data triangulation:
	1) Interviews/Documents
	2) Interviews/Focus group discussions
Internal validity	3) Focus group discussions/Documents
	Through a process of contextualization (descriptive, interpretive and explanatory)
Data Analysis	Through thematic analysis using an iterative process. I have adapted Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) guide to analysing qualitative data:
	1) Get to know your data (data familiarisation process)
	2) Focus the analysis: reviewing research purpose & identifying a few key questions
	3) Categorise the information. This process is also known as coding/indexing the data
	4) Identify patterns and connections within and between groups
	5) Interpretation of data. Attaching meaning & significance to the analysis
Research Findings	Interpretation and narrative based driven by the data

Source: Author's idea

2.3 Research Design: A Case-Study Approach

The naming of the case to be studied is an important decision as it sets the limits for the research and provides the framework of inquiry. *Case-study has been used to carry out the research.* Some commentators have argued that no clear cut accord subsists regarding the nature and content of case studies in Social Sciences. However, there are two fundamental differences which needs to be given attention, both in general and specific terms. These are:

- 1) The case? and
- 2) The case study?

In theory every social happening can be seen as a case, and as Ragin and Becker (1992) claimed, social sciences define cases in very broad terms. They explained that case studies were the well-known methodology of the Chicago School, and in the early years of that practice, a case was simply seen as an individual and his life history. They further argue that this way of doing cases is still in use today, but this is in contrast with the macro-sociological tradition, where cases can be large regions and nation-states as known from historical sociology and world system analysis. In this contemporary world, cases are situated between these two limits, for example a case may include many things such as organisations or institutions, communities, groups or specific events or processes. According to Creswell (1998) a case study is an in-depth exploration of a “bounded system” arrived at through detailed, intensive data collection involving multiple sources of information, both primary and secondary in its historical, economic, political, and socio-cultural context. It includes the articulation of research questions, a thorough description of the context, and the identification of the issues (Millar Wood, 2008). For the purpose of this study I have adapted a straightforward and valid definition:

“....an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994:13).”

As many commentators of emphasise, case studies are not necessarily first-hand studies within a factual context, and they do not have to be complicated and qualitative in orientation. They are however context-dependent using a set of qualitative methodological techniques to understand a social phenomenon. This research examines two main cases: Freetown in the Western Area and Makeni in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone with a specific focus on issues relating to education and health policies. I have chosen them because capital cities in developing countries always have the best schools, health facilities, and other social amenities. To incorporate a balanced view in the research I have included Makeni, a new city in the Northern Province to try to cover a wide range of responses. The burgeoning benefits of using a case-study are that it can prove invaluable in increasing knowledge of a subject. It also tends to focus on collecting up-to-date information (Gray, 2009: 248). For this reason, Gray maintained that data collection may involve the use of not only contemporary documentation, but also direct observation and systematic interviewing (ibid.). In this regard, therefore, I have used interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary reviews as the methods of collecting data for this study, and I will explain these later in this chapter. I have also made use of field notes which I developed while in the field.

It describes not only my experience and observations, such as those made while engaged in participant observation, but also the elucidation of the responses.

Gray's view about using a case study method was also supported by Gillham (2004:19), who stated that the collection and detailed study of multiple forms of evidence is to gain an understanding of the subject. Shank (2002:53) identifies three approaches for undertaking a case-study (cited in Millar-Wood, 2008:49): first, he analysed the work of Stake who focused on the importance of field observations for a case-study, which should capture the details of a particular case. Stake stated that "the single case has to make its own case" and not attempt to be a proxy for multiple cases. Second, Shank examined the work of Merriam who asserted that "qualitative case studies can be characterised as being particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic". This means that the researcher's determinations to present clear facts of the case would benefit the study provided their taping and narrating allow readers to grasp the case more fully. Third, Shank refers to the approach of Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis whose work he described as moving "beyond the simple notion of documenting a case toward the richer and more complex notion of portraiture".

While improvement in access to affordable quality education and health care services is increasingly seen as vital for a nation's socio-economic progress and development and as key human security concerns, this research design should enable the study to be more focused and concise, and should provide more practical solutions. Soy (1997) argues that the flexibility of the case-study method allows it to introduce first-hand and unexpected results during the process, and could lead to the research taking new directions. Its applicability to everyday problems, existing human circumstances, and its public availability through written reports makes it spot-on for this study.

2.4 Selection Process and Time-Frame

Marshall & Rossman (1999) emphasised the importance of several key selection decisions that must be made when carrying out qualitative research: the place to be studied, the time-scaled of the study, and the selection of the participants to be interviewed. They concluded that the study is defined by and closely linked to that place. Therefore the naming of the "case" to be studied is a very important decision as it sets the limits for the research and provides the framework for inquiry. Sierra Leone was chosen for this study because it is classified as a low-income and developing country, it has been a failed state, there was a civil conflict for eleven years (1991-2002), and the country is now recovering from civil war (post-conflict). As a result it has drawn the interest of the international community, and

primarily has been under the microscope of the IMF, the World Bank, and other donor agencies as it aspires to carry out neo-liberal reforms. This, therefore, offers a rich and interesting mix of policies and programs in the education and health sector that need to be critically evaluated. The Human Development Reports and subsequent evaluations of the Millennium Development Goals since 2002 have however, shown the need to examine these policies to understand their effect upon the population. The country is reasonably stable, and there is adequate and accessible data from the Education and Health Ministries, and also from other agencies that are involved in trying to improve education and health care there.

Similarly, the period during which data was collected and analysed was also considered very important. Much of the literature points to the late 1980s as the time when the relationship between the IMF and the World Bank began with the Government of Sierra Leone and the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Programme. This study covers the period from 2002 to 2013 when the IMF and the World Bank were involved there. The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (IPRSP) was developed and introduced in 1999, and has been subsequently reviewed over the years to incorporate neo-liberal policies in both education and health.

2.5 Data Collection

The collection of data for this study took the form of a multi-method approach using both primary and secondary methods. Data was collected in the Northern Region and the Western Area as it was not possible to cover the Southern and Eastern Regions due to time and the resources available to me. I spent five months in Sierra Leone from October 2010 to February 2011 collecting data.

2.5.1 Primary Data

Primary data is the study of a subject through first-hand observation and investigation (Dawson, 2009), and consists of conducting semi-structured and open-ended interviews and focus group discussions, comprising 6-7 participants. I followed these methods to facilitate more focused exploration. In each type of interview, I developed and used an interview guide based on two different questioning strategies proposed by David (2007): the topic guide and the questioning route. The topic guide according to David is a list of subjects or issues to be pursued in the individual interviews and focus group discussions. By contrast, the questioning route is a sequence of questions demanding specific answers (Krueger, 1998). Participants are selected using purposive samples based on their experience, expertise,

educational background, and are chosen from a wide range of backgrounds to guarantee variety of viewpoints. Qualitative sampling is described as purposive when it aims to select appropriate information sources to explore meanings, and theoretical when its aim is the selection of people, situations or processes on theoretical grounds to explore new ideas and develop theory as data analysis progresses (cf. Fossey et al., 2002:726).

2.5.1.1 Individual Interviews

I followed the framework as suggested by Patton (1995:205) and conducted face-to-face interviews that were semi-structured using open-ended questions so that participants had the opportunity to elaborate on their answers. It took the form of a more formal sit-down approach with those taking part. As the interview progresses, Dawson (2009:74) stated that the researcher needs to ask questions, listen carefully to responses, and then probe for more information by obtaining clarification, or further explanation, if necessary. He stated that the main aim is to elicit specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained from other interviews. During the fieldwork, I conducted 48 interviews and participants were drawn from all stakeholders that were involved in education and health policies and practice. For instance from academia, government officials, civil society organisations, funding organisations, private for-profit institutions, and also from the local population. The reason for selecting such a wide range of participants was to achieve a balanced result. I used a digital recorder to record the interviews with their consent. Each interview lasted for 30 minutes. I used a recorder to tape 14 interviews, after which it broke down, so I took notes during the remainder.

Before I left the United Kingdom for the fieldwork in Sierra Leone, I had already done a thorough review of literature on neo-liberalism and human security, clearly setting out the focus of the research and the research questions. I had developed the interview questions in consensus with my supervisors, and also prepared an interview schedule that had a list of questions centred on education and health, the stakeholders' perspectives about neo-liberalism and human security, and a fieldwork plan for the entire period of my stay. This schedule ensured that uniformity and consistency were applied to each interview. The fieldwork plan clearly set out all the arrangements and the extent of each interview. I kept records of interviews conducted, and also made follow-up meetings to get further documents. Every participant was contacted via emails and phone calls before I went to Sierra Leone. I informed them about the purpose of the study, its relevance, and how their answers would contribute to the way in which policies would be formulated and

implemented that could enhance the education and health security of the citizens. All participants interviewed were guaranteed anonymity, and I also informed them that their responses would be kept confidential because of the sensitive nature of the study.

2.5.1.2 Focus Group Discussions

In addition to the interview method discussed above, I also used focus group discussions (group interview technique) as another method of collecting data for this study. It is one of the most common methods of obtaining qualitative data in the academic arena (Krueger & Casey, 2000). This is because as Cheng (2007) put it “it is far more appropriate for the generation of new ideas formed within a social context”. According to David (2007), focus group discussions are an important and valuable instrument for data gathering especially when the researcher tries to understand different viewpoints of reality. Krueger & Casey (2000) also stated that a focus group is intended to make a group of people with specific attributes provide qualitative data connected to the research topic in a comfortable environment, under the guidance of a moderator, and through discussion. This approach encourages the exploration of how opinions are made and revised through the collaboration between participants.

Morgan defined focus groups as “guided discussions in order to generate a rich understanding of participants’ experiences and beliefs”, and has given three basic reasons to illustrate why focus group discussions are valuable: (i) exploratory and discovery: it is used to find out as much as possible especially about people, groups, topics that are not well, or thoroughly understood (ii) context and depth: through which thoughts and experiences are elicited, and (iii) interpretation: offering an explanation about why some things are as they are and how they became to be what they are (cf. David, 2007). Hence, Morgan (1998:12) concluded that “group discussions create a process of sharing and comparing among the participants...they will not only investigate issues of context and depth but will also generate their own interpretations of the topics that come up in their discussions.”

Dawson (2009) also offers several other advantages for using focus group discussions as a data collection method. She stated that focus group discussions can provide an extensive array of responses during one meeting; participants can ask questions of each other, reducing the effect of researcher’s bias; it helps participants to remember issues they might otherwise have forgotten; helps to overcome their inhibitions, especially if they know other group members; the group effect is seen as a useful resource in data analysis; and participants interaction is useful to analyse. Although focus group discussions can be laborious and can

result in lot of data which are difficult to arrange, Rabiee (2004) argues that they do offer relatively quick access to a lot of people and their ideas.

During this research, I conducted four focus group discussions, two in Freetown, and the other two in Makeni. Initially I had planned to conduct three focus group discussions; two in Freetown and one in Makeni. However, after I had completed the three focus group discussions, new issues of interest emerged during the third focus group discussions conducted in Makeni. As a result I quickly arranged another one there. I adopted Morrison et al. (2002) approach which indicates that, when the information gathered from different participants, in different groups, becomes redundant, such that the saturation (as a condition of qualitative data gathering) was reached, the organisation of new focus groups becomes unnecessary. Cheng (2007) describes this process as “saturation of opinions,” which means the principle for adding or reducing the number of interviews using a focus group. Taking this into consideration, I was able to address the new issues that arose during the fourth focus group discussion. Three of the focus group discussions consisted of six participants and the other consisted of seven participants. The recommended number of participants is between 6-8 (see Krueger & Casey, 2000; and Tang & Davies, 1995). In Freetown the focus group discussions were held at the Ministry of Education conference room, while those conducted in Makeni was held at the University of Makeni campus. Each of the focus group discussions lasted for about 35 minutes.

In each of these discussions I acted as a moderator/facilitator, greeted all the participants, presented the topic of conversation, and asked unambiguous questions, managed departure from the subject, and ended break-away discussions. I also ensured that the discussion is not dominated by one person whilst trying to ensure that each of the participants made a contribution. All discussions were recorded with the consent of the participants, and at the same time I took notes.

2.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data involves the gathering of information from other sources (articles, books, reports and policy documents). All the articles I have used in this study came from Academic Search and Business Source Premier Databases. Hence data collected for example from the review of articles is scientific and peer-reviewed which gives the study the conviction of using accurate information.

2.5.2.1 Secondary Documentary Sources

Documents play significant part in data collection (Yin, 2009). As Connelly (2010) stated, secondary analysis is the use of data gathered in a previous study or collected for the purpose of testing new hypotheses or answering new research questions. As a result, he goes on to argue that secondary analysis is perhaps suited best for descriptive, exploratory, and correlational studies. Such studies may provide answers to primary questions that could lead to the development of a theory. According to Silverman (2001), documents are considered to be unchanging and reliable investigating record because they fill in gaps that are not covered by the participants to enhance the reliability of the study.

During this research, I have collected documents from secondary literature such as books, reports, policy documents, and articles found in databases and web archives of the Sierra Leone Government, the United Nations, the World Bank, and the IMF as well as from non-state actors and other international organisations. As Yin (2009) argued: documents provide a re-assessment of issues and present the basis of connecting the past with the present events. So they are very helpful in corroborating field data. However, there is a problem of validity and reliability of secondary data. This is because accessing documents from government officials and other international institutions may sometimes be problematic, as the official procedure involved in retrieving appropriate documents from these departments is time consuming and very challenging, and most documents are confidential. I was able to address this problem by adopting the four quality control methods put forward by Scott (1990) to ensure that the sources of the document were valid, reliable, and important by checking for their credibility, authenticity, representativeness and meaningfulness.

2.6 Data Integrity

In order to present a “true picture” of the research process, practical consideration was taken very seriously, as anything that prevent it jeopardises the validity and reliability of the study. In order to ensure integrity of all the data collected for this research, I have used the triangulation approach, and I have also adopted the six strategic considerations Shram (2003) identified for fieldwork (cf. Millar-wood, 2008). As Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) stated, this ensures the level of accountability and legitimacy that is needed for data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

This study has used different methods to collect data. Gillham (2004) argues that data accumulated by different methods but bearing on the same issues is part of what he called a

multi-method approach. He stated that if this multi-method approaches agree then we can be reasonably confident that we are getting a true picture of the research. However, Gillham also said that if they do not then we have to be cautious about basing our understanding on any one set of data. This approach from different practical positions is usually known as triangulation. Triangulation of data sources and methods thus allows the contrast and coming together of perspectives to identify corroborating and differing accounts, in order to examine as many aspects of the research issue as possible (Fossey et al., 2002:728). The reason why this is important to this study and drawing from Williams and Morrow (2009) is that, triangulation helps to provide evidence of data quality. I have combined individual interviews with information from focus group discussions and the analysis of various documents to understand whether the data from various sources point to the same conclusion (please refer to table 2.0, page 28).

The other method of achieving data integrity was adopting Shram (2003) six strategic considerations for undertaking fieldwork (cf. Millar-Wood, 2008); these are 1) intent (allowing for first person interviews with informed participants); 2) focus (to keep focused on the central questions of the research); 3) involvement (providing clear objectives of the research); 4) familiarity (a balance between what is known, what is needed to be known, and what is wanted to be known and how much each of these will reveal to the participants in the study); 5) positioning (deciding in advance what data was needed to address the research questions, and to ascertain what data was actually available and what was not); and 6) role awareness (careful advance planning and the articulation of clear and yet discrete interview questions are required especially in sensitive issues such as education and health). I took into consideration these six strategic issues while carrying out this research because they serve as a reliability check.

2.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of examining the databases to address the research questions (see Creswell, 2005). Fossey et al. (2002:728) described it as “a process of reviewing, synthesising and interpreting data to describe and explain the phenomena or social worlds being studied”. The main aim according to Robson is to reduce the data or to at least reconfigure it to a more manageable and comprehensive form (cf. Rabiee, 2004:675). Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) also stated that good analysis depends on understanding the data. They argue that for qualitative analysis, this means you reading and re-reading the text; audio recordings should be transcribed and read through carefully to pick out relevant

themes. Therefore, I have used a thematic and narrative approach in analysing all the data collected for this study. Content or thematic analysis is based on the examination of the data for recurrent instances of some kind, and these instances are then systematically identified across the data set, and grouped together by means of a coding system (Silverman, 2004). Tentative data organisation and analysis begins during the data collection process (Oppenheim, 2005), that is in the field. This was oriented towards an “iterative testing and re-testing of theoretical ideas using the data” (Pope et al., 2000:115).

Hence, to guide the analysis process during the research, I have adopted a framework from Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003:2) that consists of five key steps which describe the basic elements of narrative data analysis and interpretation. The process, they argue is fluid as it provides the flexibility of moving back and forth between steps. These steps are summarised below:

- **Get to know your data:** this involves a familiarisation of the data taking into consideration the quality of the data before proceeding accordingly. This also involves reading and re-reading text carefully and writing down any impressions you have as you go through the data.
- **Focus the analysis:** this process consist of reviewing the purpose of the evaluation and what you want to find out by identifying a few key questions that you want your analysis to answer. In this approach, you focus your analysis to look at how individuals or groups responded to each question or topic. This should lead to identifying inconsistencies and differences. The same approach can be applied to particular topics.
- **Categorise the information:** this process is also referred to as coding or indexing the data. It involves reading and re-reading the text and identifying themes or patterns and then organising them into coherent categories. As you categorise the data, you might identify other themes that serve as sub-categories. Continue to categorise until you have identified and labelled all relevant themes.
- **Identify patterns and connections within and between categories:** as you organise the data into categories either by question or by case, you will begin to see patterns and connections both within and between the categories. For instance, what key ideas are being expressed within the category? What are the similarities and differences in the way people responded, including the subtle variation? To show which categories

appear more important, you may wish to count the number of times a particular subject pattern occurs, or the number of participants who refer to certain themes. These counts provide a very rough estimate of relative importance of each theme.

- **Interpretation:** this involves using the themes and connections to explain the findings (narrative/descriptive). You need to develop a list of key points or important findings that you have discovered as a result of categorising and sorting the data. It is also helpful to include quotes or descriptive examples to illustrate your points and bring the data to life.

Source: Taylor-Powell & Renner (2003)

Data collected for this research (including memos, recorded interviews and focus group discussions, and field notes) were transcribed and then analysed. Once I had acquainted myself with the data, I began coding it. I started by first splitting the transcript to be analysed into sentences, phrases or passages and categorised them, using expressions that came from precise vocabularies of the participants. According to the practical similarities and variances between the categorised expressions, I then classified labels collectively into topics. I then re-labelled these using related words, and finally, grouped those that were connected and incoherent and re-named them. This procedure according to Gelo et al. (2008) allows higher levels of abstraction to be obtained in the description of the data, and identifies the constituents of the analysed texts. As Breen (2006) stated, in extracting themes from the interviews and focus group discussions, it is important to take account of the extensiveness, intensity, and specificity of comments made, in deciding what weight should be given to each. Breen went further to state that the researcher might also consider including the most noteworthy quotes in his/her report, to give readers a flavour of what statements were made in support of particular themes. That is what I did during the process of analysing the data for this research.

Coding is very important in the analysis exercise. It is a process of grouping evidence and labelling portions of text so that they reflect increasingly broader perspectives (Gelo et al., 2008). Once codes have been assigned to sentences, or to a collection of sentences, it is easy to identify the themes, both across and within groups or individuals (Breen, 2006). Breen argues that codes frequency supplies researchers with an objective measure of the prevalence of an attitude both between and within groups.

The obtained data is then presented. Presenting qualitative results essentially involves a debate on the information acquired in a narrative form. Gelo et al. (2008) argue that the idea is to construct a discussion which persuades the reader that the identified categories and dimensions are effectively grounded in the observed data, and not imposed by the researcher. They further assert that figures, maps, and tables may also be used to represent these results. Therefore data explanation comprises of examining what the findings mean, and to make sense of it. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003b) it is based on a process of inductive inference, which refers to a process of creating meaningful and consistent explanation, understanding, conceptual frameworks, and/or theories drawing on a systematic observation of phenomena. They argue that it consists of giving a meaning to the results with reference to the specific and particular context of the study (e.g settings, participants). This process of contextualisation is crucial to deal with the problem of qualitative internal validity (i.e. descriptive, interpretive, and explanatory validity).

2.8 Limitation of the Study

A study of this nature has its limitations. One of these is overcoming the issue of bias to ensure that it is objective and transparent and to guarantee quality of the research. The researcher is generally faced with the following critiques: objectivity, methods of analysis, interaction in the field and lack of representativeness with regard to generalisation (Ocler et al., 2009:34). Because of the in-depth nature of such studies and the analysis of data required, another weakness usually relates to the use of a small, selective sample (Cormack, 1991). Brantlinger et al. (2005) caution that objectivity and subjectivity are major concerns for both qualitative research and critical theory. They explained that subjectivity is a problem that interferes with research validity. While also, constructing an absolute account of objective reality that is completely free from bias, through the interpretation and meaning given to participants' responses exactly the way they see it, is also a problem. To address this problem I spotted these risks before I went for the field research, clearly setting out the conjectures and standards of the study in advance. The interview were conducted on a broad range of people including those who were involved both in the education and health sector whose experience and understandings would add to mine. I recorded the data contemporaneously by recording and taking notes thereby ensuring transparency in analysing the data.

Another limitation to this study is that there was not enough time or resources to interview more people, especially ordinary Sierra Leoneans although included in the focus group discussions, in order to add different perspectives on the analysis of the effects of neo-liberal

reforms in achieving the goal of human security. Similarly, from my own critical self-reflection the use of the term ‘human security’ also posed a major challenge. This is because as the concept of human security is very broad, in this study I have limited its application only to education and health care. However, as the study progressed I realised that education and health care are in fact wide subjects on their own. Therefore combining these two made the study very difficult. On reflection, therefore, it would have been preferable to have focused on either education or health but not both. Then I would have had more time to provide a very detailed analysis. Nevertheless, it is also right not to have done so as the result may not have been balanced if I had only chosen one.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has summarised the philosophical and methodological orientation used in investigating the research questions for this study. As shown in the chapter, the choice of research methodology was guided by: qualitative research method through the lens of critical theory, which it is argued was appropriate for this study. This is because they both seek to gain an understanding of a particular situation from the perspective of the participants with the aim at not only understanding the reality but also making sense of the hidden power relations in the way in which knowledge is constituted, and the effect it has in achieving the goal of human security. This is important because and as will be shown later in the thesis, knowledge produced in neo-liberal policy proposal is not neutral. The methods of collecting data were individual interviews, focus group discussions, documentary analysis and field notes. It also shows how the data would be analysed using a thematic and narrative approach. The thematic approach was based on identifying themes across the data set and then grouping these together using a coding system. The narrative approach took a descriptive form of the emerging themes to establish and develop new theories. Finally, the chapter concluded by identifying the main challenges of using qualitative research through the lens of critical theory, and I have explained how these challenges were addressed, and then offered a critical self-reflection on the entire work.

Chapter 3

Critical Theory: The Theoretical Framework of the Thesis

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework upon which this study is based, and draws upon the application of critical theory in order to evaluate the neo-liberal reforms introduced in education and health in Sierra Leone. Bramwell & Lane (2011) stated that a theoretical framework is crucial to research on neo-liberal reforms because it influences what is studied, how it is studied, the conclusions reached, and the recommendations proposed, as well as the political implications of the research. With these in mind, the aim of this chapter is to draw out the following themes from critical theory that will be used to critically evaluate neo-liberalism: power/knowledge, ideology and governance. This will uncover the power dynamics, governance approach, and the use of language and the ideology which have helped to produce and rationalise conditions of control, subordination, marginalisation and inequality in many ways, seen as a description of the imposition of neo-liberal policies. The study will carry out a critical theory analysis of neo-liberalism in Chapter 5, as it discusses neo-liberalism as a global development policy.

While the concept of critical theory originated from the “Frankfurt School” in Germany in the 1920s as a social theory based on neo-Marxism, this study tends to draw from the influential work of three Critical Theorists: Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas and Robert W. Cox, whose ideas have influenced my analysis in assessing/evaluating how such a socially-derived power structure, that is the dominance of market-oriented policies, inhibits the goal of achieving human security. Their analysis is focused on revealing the power dynamics, governance initiatives, and the use of language and ideology that has produced conditions of domination, subordination, and marginalisation that have helped to justify the generation of unfairness in many ways, seen as a consequence of the introduction of neo-liberal policies.

First is an explanation of what critical theory is, why it is important and how it has emerged as a theoretical framework. Then there is an examination of key concepts that underpin the work of each of these writers to show how their work is useful in understanding neo-liberal discourse as a form of knowledge, language, governance, power and ideology that has in practice undermine a more democratic and inclusive approach in which policies should be developed and the reforms carried out. These follows an explanation of the meaning of critical theory, the method used and what it brings in to the analysis of this study.

3.2 What is Critical Theory?

According to Marrow & Brown (1994:14) the term “critical theory” was used by its leading theorists (Max Horkheimer:1895-1973, Theodor Adorno:1903-1969, and Herbert Marcuse:1898-1979) to identify their approach, in contrast to other forms of “traditional theory”, which attempted to emulate the naturalistic objectivism of the natural sciences, an approach to methodology that Critical Theorists pejoratively labelled “positivism”. Further, it was argued that such analysis could not take the form of a fair, value-free examination of social reality, but should instead be involved deliberately with the method of its transformation. As Farrands & Worth (2005:49) illustrate, critical theory was developed through a critique of Marxism-Leninism, especially of its account of the global economy, social being and subjectivity, as well as through a comprehensive ontological and methodological attack on simplistic forms of historical materialism that excludes the present. Instead it was argued that a consistent materialist approach, one that began with the assumption that consciousness (awareness) could be understood only in relation to economic and social structures rooted in social beings, required a more self-reflective conception of method, a more subtle theory of culture, and a social and psychological analysis of class consciousness (see Marrow & Brown, 1994:15).

Farrands & Worth (2005) argue that critical theory is best understood as a post-war Western Marxist debate that engages a particular problematic: one that is precisely concerned with how to make sense of the world, and of our consciousness of the world, our being-in-the-world, and of our capacity for subjectivity and agency set against a background of enormous political forces and structures that appear to render us without voice, agency or critical reflexivity. Because critical theory is derived from such a socio-political and emancipatory tradition, Fossey et al. (2002) argue that knowledge is not seen as discovered by objective inquiry but as acquired through critical discourse and debate. Critical theory seeks to achieve social transformation towards a more unbiased society. It does not only offer diverse voices, but also shares an appreciation of the historical construction of reality, the critique of domination, the value of emancipation, and a more reflective stance in understanding the influence of neo-liberalism on human security (Murray & Ozanne, 2009:836). Critical theory produces disparate lenses through which to comprehend social reality, lenses that make society and its phenomena plausible. A summary of the main ideas of critical theory is shown below:

- 1) Critical theory takes an anti-positivist view about society. According to Griffiths et al. (2008:164) Critical Theorists often acknowledge the value of notions from multiple perspectives to strengthen their argument, but are of the view that there is an objective reality that is manipulated by hegemonic power structures for their own purposes of control. Such viewpoints, they maintain, tend to be concerned with macro-level policy intent and power relations, arguing that agency (representation and institutions) at the micro level is inadequate to make any real impression on policy processes. If people begin to see the contradictions between the social construction of the world and their lived experience (reality), this dissent will tend to be dismissed by the social groups that dominate society (Meyer-Emerick, 2004:2). This view has led Morrow & Brown (1994:9) to argue that the study of the empirical character of societies differs in at least two basic ways from the natural sciences which hold a positivist view of the world: first, “social facts” are qualitatively different from the facts of nature because they are created and re-created by our own actions as human beings (see Giddens 1982b: 13-14); and second, because we create society, the application of Sociology or Social Science is not really analogous to controlling physical nature. From this point of view, critical theory charges that the failures of old-fashioned humanistic methods lie in their inattention of this essential problem.
- 2) Critical theory resonates from the term “critique” and this is another specific approach that is related to this study. Where critique usually implies negative appraisal, in the context of critical theory the term has an array of meaning, although not obvious in common sense. Morrow & Brown (1994:7) outlined three fundamental aspects central to contemporary critical theory that are concerned with critique. One sense of critique in critical theory is concerned with unveiling ideological mystification in social relations. Another, even more fundamental connotation, is methodological, given a concern with critique as involving establishing the presuppositions of approaches to the nature of reality, knowledge and explanation. Yet another dimension is associated with self-reflectivity of the researcher and the linguistic basis of representation. This study employs all these aspects of critique to aid its analysis, together with the views of the participants, in order to form the basis of a new theory. So this study takes the form of a realistic evaluation which will be explained later in the next sub-section.

- 3) Other commentators have described critical theory as a form of science and inquiry as it examines relationships of power and the underlying structures in society throughout the entire policy process that produce population inequalities (Grams & Christ, 1992). This produces various forms of disaffection between people that helps to inhibit the understanding of human security. It asks questions about injustice, inequality, and oppression that highlight the power imbalances in all societies (Millar Wood, 2008:12). These societal structures determine, for example, the choice of opinions likely to be articulated and considered as legitimate by powerful institutions, the types of policies to be implemented and reforms to be carried out by poor countries like Sierra Leone. Thus, the neo-liberal reforms have been described by McGuigan (2005) as a misleading form of communication (following Habermas) motivated by unequal power relations. Arce (2006:30) argues that this concept of marketisation, has placed societal actors in the role of "passive recipients" of state initiatives, incapable of contesting or modifying the implementation of market reforms, a point which resonates most strongly with the position of citizens in Sierra Leone. Critical theory focuses on the critique and transformation of such current structures, relationships, and conditions that shape and constrain the development of social practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), and it does so by examining them within their historical, social, cultural and political contexts. Relating this to education and health, which are key human security concerns, critical theory examines the structures of school and health systems as well as many of the elements of education and health processes (e.g. teachers, health workers, training, testing, governance, curriculum, etc.) that create unsatisfactory power relationships between the providers of education and health care services and the population. This is important because making education and health care accessible and affordable are very important measures in addressing risks associated to poverty and inequalities in order to attain human security. This philosophy of understanding power relations and the underlying structures in society according to Parlour & McCormack (2012:309) is underpinned by a fundamental belief that no facet of social phenomena can be fully understood unless it is connected to its historical and structural context. Parlour & McCormack maintained that this move to refocus its philosophical basis have broadened the debate on matters of domination, power inequities, political contexts and oppression.

It follows that the aim of critical theory, as Farrands & Worth (2001:49) show, is to give an account of how the present situation came to be. Farrands & Worth pointed out that such an account grapples from the start with the question of how our consciousness can grasp any kind of reality critically, if we are obsessed by structural conditions that anticipate a thorough concern of the world around us. Therefore the contribution of a critical theory framework to this study is three fold: (i) it amplifies our consciousness and comprehension of social problems and ensures that the views and injustices of marginalised people are adequately represented. (ii) It promotes self-reflection, mutual learning, participation and empowerment (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), rather than the acceptance of discoveries or reforms imposed upon poor countries. (iii) It shows the limitations of the present neo-liberal policies in education and health in Sierra Leone by illuminating resulting inequalities (St. John, 2007). Therefore critical theory has a direct relevance to understanding the effectiveness of policies which are increasingly being advocated to amplify the voices of people, now considered by neo-liberals as consumers of education and health care services, and to strengthen their participation in policy evaluation and development (Fossey et al., 2002:720).

3.3 Critical Theory Methodology

The methodology used takes the form of an emancipatory practice development (EPD) approach that is set within the principles of “realistic evaluation” outlined by Pawson and Tilley (1997). EPD emphasises the importance of participatory, collaborative and inclusive approaches to policy process (McCormack et al., 2007), and also with creating a culture that is not only sustainable but also in which developing practice is not dependent on any individual (Garbett and McCormack, 2004). In this way Linklater (1996) opined that critical theory 'judges social arrangements by their capacity to embrace open dialogue', so that it can 'envisage new forms of political community' that overcome exclusion and inequality. This approach allows for a methodical analysis of the social and contextual elements that influence the exposition of results associated with the neo-liberal reform. Pawson and Tilley (1997) argue that such an evaluation consists of interplay of individual and institution, agency and structure and of micro and macro processes. This would provide a much more significant and accurate understanding of the impact of neo-liberalism in achieving the goal of human security within the study. The use of critical theory in this study does not only contribute to a commitment of critique, knowledge and emancipation, which are the fundamental principles and aims of critical theory, but also provide an epistemological alternative to the positivist approach to understanding social phenomena (Farrands & Worth, 2001). In concluding this section, therefore, critical theory is oriented towards seeking action

and transformation for the poor, towards developing consciousness about circumstances in society (and in education and health) that limit choices, strengthen hierarchies, reproduce unfair structures, and continue to marginalise some groups of people. But how did critical theory emerge as a framework in understanding these social problems? The next section that follows explains this.

3.4 The Emergence of Critical Theory

Critical theory originated from the “Frankfurt School” in Germany in the 1920s as a social theory based on neo-Marxism. The principal members of the Frankfurt School, according to Jessop (2012) were Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Theodore Adorno (1903-1969), and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). The term was coined by Horkheimer in 1937 to describe a politically committed response to the problems of modernity (Jessop, 2012:2). A more specific focus was on the substantive problem of domination that is concerned with the ways social relations also mediate power associations to create various forms of alienation that inhibit the realisation of human possibilities (Marrow & Brown, 1994:10). The response in understanding such problems of domination has taken many different forms such as reflective assessment, evaluation, analysis, and a critique of society that leads to the emancipation and transformation of individuals and society through the intervention of human action leading to social change (Held, 1980, p. 35). Thus the aim from the main members of the Frankfurt School was an endeavour to revitalise and uphold the enlightenment idea that knowledge can be an influential device for creating better societies and the foundation for individual and group emancipation. This is an important platform in achieving the goal of human security.

Yaman (2011) stated that the Institute was known as an interdisciplinary Marxist school of social theory at an early stage. Marxism is composed of two interrelated parts: dialectical and historical materialism (Mahao, 2006). The former according to Mahao entails a theory of social consciousness while the latter is concern with issues relating to social development. At the earlier stages, this theory was significantly influenced by Marx and George Lukas’s history and class consciousness, through the writings of pioneer Critical Theorists such as Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse (Mubarak, 2008). However, after the World Wars, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the writings of an influential contemporary Critical Theorist, Jürgen Habermas, significantly reduced the Marxian influence on critical theory (ibid.), defining it as a reconstructed historical materialism (Habermas, 1979). Through his criticisms of orthodox Marxism, which is a leading mode of practices and beliefs developed

by Marx, Habermas widened the scope of critical theory far beyond the class interest of Marx's theory to include day-to-day societal issues such as culture, family, sexuality, science, etc. (Ray, 1990). This has significantly amplified the subject matter of critical theory.

More lately, Anthony Giddens, another prominent modern British Critical Theorist also developed an autonomous explanation of critical theory from the 1970s and beyond. Marrow & Brown (1994:20) stated that, while Giddens' reputation is more recent, emerging secondary literature over the past several years suggest that his "structuration theory" also represents another major reference point for the claims of critical theory as a distinctive and influential approach to the human sciences. In his structuration theory is a view of social structure being produced by and acting back on the knowledgeable agents who are the subjects of that structure which they instantiate through their constitution of it (Clegg, 1989:15). According to Marrow & Brown, even though Giddens rebuffed the reform of historical materialism and evolutionary theories put forward by Habermas, he argued for a different approach that should take the form of a "contemporary critique of historical materialism". In many respect, however, they argue that this has proved to be quite complementary with that of Habermas. Hence, the work of these Critical Theorists, to some extent aimed to achieve a just, rational, humane, and reconciled society through critical analysis of the social and political environments prevailing in the world (Mubarak, 2008). Nonetheless, the Frankfurt Theorists did possess a certain unity of purpose, namely, the attempt to move society towards rational institutions, which as they said, "would ensure a true, free and just life" (Held, 2004a:15). This feeling of unanimity and focus gave the 'school' its well-defined reputation.

In particular, as Hayden & el-Ojeili (2006) argue, the Frankfurt School Theorists challenged orthodox Marxism's dogmatic adherence to historical materialism and its positivist views of economics, politics, and science, advocating instead of a self-reflective version of 'immanent critique'. According to Horkheimer (1972), 'immanent critique' is a deep-thinking method related to which philosophy and its instructions for social change are viewed as indivisible from the historical, social, and material frameworks of their own origin. In other words, immanent critique involves critically questioning the norms and values found within existing social arrangements and institutions, in order to expose ambiguities and differences between ideas and practices which often lead to unacknowledged forms of oppression (Hayden & el-Ojeili, 2006). For example, neo-liberals believe that the reforms could increase economic growth and improve living standards. Critical theory is a very useful framework in this

regard in assessing such a claim to understand whether this is true and how it associates with the benefits of particular social groups irrespective of this. Once such inconsistencies and conflicts are exposed, traditionally likely prospects for emancipation and social transformation can be identified and put into practice. More recently, according to Jensen, critical theory has been concerned with analysing government policies, attitudes of individuals and groups, discrimination and rights of the oppressed, and challenges related to the creation of social balance between the personal autonomy of individuals and the universal solidarity of collectives (cf. Mubarak, 2008). As a result, critical theory has gained much popularity as a critique of authority, capitalism and all forms of oppression and discrimination (ibid.).

Members of the Frankfurt School were also engaged in resourceful and theoretical undertakings. They view such hypothesising as imperative in going further than what the real results are meant to be. For example, Marcuse (1973:145) argues that, ‘the actual domain of knowledge is not the given evidences about things as they are, but the critical appraisal of them as an introduction to passing beyond their given form’. Developing Hegel’s difference concerning what subsists and what might however happen, the Frankfurt Scholars had in mind the prospect of a sensible future, of moving away from that which has occurred but doing so in a way that grew out of prevailing social structures. The implications of critical theory are significant insofar as theory is not regarded merely as an attempt to verify reality ‘as it is’, but to re-evaluate current conditions and forge new forms of social life consistent with the goal of emancipation (Hayden & el-Ojeili, 2006). As one writer (Hoffman, 1987: 233) has put it, critical theory:

“Entails the view that humanity has potentialities other than those manifested in current society. Critical theory, therefore, seeks not simply to reproduce society via description, but to understand society and change it. It is both descriptive and constructive in its theoretical intent; it is both an intellectual and a social act. It is not merely an expression of the concrete realities of the historical situation, but also a force for change within those conditions.”

Now that the meaning of critical theory and how it emerged has been explained, the study will now turn to examine the work of the three influential Critical Theorists that was mentioned earlier in this chapter: Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas and Robert W. Cox. In doing so the study will illustrate the key concepts that underpin the work of these writers. Their ideas have influence my analysis of the effect of market-oriented policies (neo-liberal reforms), imposed by international institutions including the IMF and the World Bank on

poor countries like Sierra Leone, in order to understand its part in achieving the goal of human security.

3.4.1 Max Horkheimer: Critical Theory and Dialectic of Enlightenment

Max Horkheimer's work was based on two major aspects: first, in providing an apparent criticism of socio-historical conditions that denies the intellectual unity of autonomy and suppresses independent thought; and second, the inconsolable urge to change things into better ones (Walentowicz, 2006:2). While his work was originally a criticism of the structure of free enterprise, Walentowicz argues that, Horkheimer ultimately focussed on contemporary humanity's tendency to acquiesce itself to demagoguery and despotism, which he described as a system that had lost its self-determination and subjectivity. Horkheimer's discussion of enlightenment was therefore concerned with attaining real knowledge and understanding of the enlightenment that had become disrupted. The main concept that underpins his work is two-fold: (a) criticism enhances positive change and drives intellectual growth and progress; and (b) that "all conditions of social life that are well-regulated by human beings should depend on real consensus" in a rational society, a theme later taken up by Habermas (cf. Yaman, 2011). For example a critique of the undemocratic nature in which the neo-liberal reforms were formed and imposed in Sierra Leone, in the process leaving out the opinions of a broad range of stakeholders and their ideas, and a marginalisation of other voices that illustrates in principle significant idea in his critical theory. Such criticism requires only a thorough critical assessment that allows us to gain an insight into the rich and complex mechanisms of social life, which is why in his critique of traditional theory Horkheimer admits its usefulness (Walentowicz, 2006:67).

According to Horkheimer, market-driven reforms are seen as the progressing consolidation of proprietorship and power, and this, he said, has added to the destructive influence these economic changes have had on human subjectivity (Walentowicz, 2006:68). People and state were succumbing to the rule of increasingly repressive forms of political and economic organisation (Horkheimer, 1978:51) themes that can be seen in contemporary terms through the imposition of neo-liberal reforms on poor countries particularly by the World Bank and the IMF. The relevance of Horkheimer's work in this study is that it enables the researcher to understand not only why the neo-liberal reforms were imposed on the Sierra Leone Government, and for whose benefit, but also the extent of its impact in achieving the goal of human security.

Horkheimer believes in raising living standards and achieving human security as a priority, in place of improving the structural principles of social co-existence that is at the heart of

neo-liberalism (Walentowicz, 2006:72). He therefore argues that because social life is historically conditioned, all efforts to improve the human lot require solid knowledge about the mechanisms (ideological and material) that generate social relation. As Walentowicz observes, Horkheimer draws inspiration from historical materialism which underscores the fact that economic relations connected with the production and reproduction of social life do not influence the thoughts and actions of individuals directly, but takes the form of a social character typical for a given social group. Walentowicz defines social character as an intermediate element between the sphere of general economic relations and individual psychology. This means that individuals are unable to determine their own destiny and personal judgement but do so in the framework of wider social structures that in turn mirror existing forms of ideational and material power.

According to Shaw (1985), even before WWI & WWII Horkheimer had begun to theorise the reasons for the yawning gap between the promise and the reality of capitalist society. Horkheimer's belief was that the present reality is inherently compromised by its very existence and seeks to provide a critical, progressive factor in the development of the masses towards the transformation of society as a whole (Shaw, 1985). Horkheimer's concern was that the ideology which formed western civilisation is an ideology of power and not of objective knowledge, an ideology he thinks is helping to control nature and humans. He considered this as an 'incorrect' way of acquiring knowledge in this modern world and believes it to be illogical and essentially self-destructive. This mode of immanent critique developed by Horkheimer continues to be suitable when we take into account the opinions and reasoning for the introduction of neo-liberal reforms in Sierra Leone and the contrast between the thinking themselves and the reality of the consequences they produce in practice.

In understanding the concept of rationality that underlies this contemporary world, Shaw (1985) argues that Horkheimer draws from the work of Hegel, the philosopher in whom the enlightenment reached its climax, and Nietzsche, the arch-critic of the enlightenment. He credits both thinkers because of their acknowledgement of the problems in the enlightenment thought already at work in the philosophy of Kant. His dialectic of enlightenment is concerned not only with emancipation and social justice, but with domination as well. He argues that reason and domination, are inextricably intertwined in modernity and that failure to understand this represented a significant failure of enlightenment thought that led to its own destruction in the hands of authoritarian and ultimately fascism. Shaw therefore posits that rationality arises, on the one hand, as a universal measure of reality and as the criterion

by which reality is judged, and, on the other hand, as an instrument for the suppression of reality in the service of individual self-preservation (individual consciousness) (Shaw, 1985:169).

Reason is entirely a faculty of a subject of who can confront a world which, aside from the significance which he imparts to it, is totally devoid of meaning (Shaw, 1985). The connection of the subject to the world is one of exploitation and supremacy. This Horkheimer called “instrumental reason”. According to Shaw, Hegel’s insights developed in the phenomenology of mind into the enlightenment concept of reason served Horkheimer here. However, he argues that what unites both of them is the conviction that knowledge is power, which is the main essence of Horkheimer’s dialectic of enlightenment. In particular, Hegel argues that enlightenment consciousness visualises reality to be an “objective world” of things which are presented to consciousness exactly as they are with “no further determination of any sort reaching its apogee in the very positivist approach to natural and social science that Critical Theorists critique” (Hegel, 1967:590). While Horkheimer believe that domination is manifested in free market society under the aegis of a more widespread and persistent form of domination, for example through the spread of neo-liberalism, he declared himself indebted to Nietzsche for this insight (Horkheimer, 1972:44). Nietzsche acknowledges in all the appearances of enlightenment the use of the determination to power. In doing so he specifically rejects the presence of any “first principles” of idea. Instrumental reason seeks not to reveal and to agree to factually established truths, but to subordinate the world to its directives. Therefore the dialectic of enlightenment presented by Horkheimer is absolutely trying to provide some understanding into the problems of reasoning that occur in modern life, and offers a critique to analyse such a practice. Horkheimer’s work is useful here because it provides an insight into not only in understanding the undemocratic way in which neo-liberal reforms were introduced but also transforming such a system into a “real democracy” in which such control could be exercised and in which real knowledge could be produced.

3.4.2 Jürgen Habermas: Critical Theory and his Communicative Action

The second part of the theoretical framework comes from Jürgen Habermas who drastically modified critical theory to guarantee its continuing relevance as a critique of the evolving form of advanced capitalism (cf. Marrow & Brown, 1994:16). His work was associated robustly with the corrected enlightenment idea of reason as the starting point for individual and group emancipation. The key concept that underpins Habermas’s work is based on the idea that western culture, in this case embodied in neo-liberalism, should be seen as a process

of the gradual social institutionalisation of reason in society (Pusey, 1987). The original intersubjective consensus upon which society was founded provides the basis for overcoming the current limitations in as much as it postulates a situation of free and frank exchange which may be used as an evaluative and analytic standard, both exposing the inadequacies of present social and institutional arrangements and providing a blueprint for a superior organisation (Maddock, 1999:47). Therefore, as Held (1980) pointed out, Habermas's work has not only significantly re-interpreted and expanded on the premises and dynamics of critical theory but has also contributed to the contemporary appreciation of the value and importance of democratic processes in decision-making.

Habermas's standing as a Critical Theorist is founded on his most famous ideas of "communicative action" and the "public sphere" (Bolton, 2005). For him, "social problems can be understood as forms of manifestation of systematically misleading communication" (Taylor, 1991:226). For example the spread of neo-liberalism by the international agencies is seen as a body of knowledge and policy prescriptions. He advances a distinct, though chiefly opposite approach to the theory of knowledge interests that is concerned with the causes of biased communication to a strategy usually referred to as Habermas's theory of communicative action. This theory shifts the emphasis to the most general conditions of intersubjective communication (Habermas, 1984) which, in this study, is very useful in terms of understanding how policies are developed. Intersubjective communication means a situation wherein policies are developed and reforms carried out through an inclusive, participatory, and consensual approach that involves all stakeholders. In understanding the theory of distorted communication, Habermas examined the ways in which meanings are used to reproduce power even under explicit rules of equality and freedom (Bohman, 2005). Present policies are so narrowly and instrumentally conceived, and over-determined, by economic concerns that they impede the development of social autonomy (Maddock, 1999:49). Relating this to Habermas's theory, because neo-liberal reforms are now embedded in human social life it becomes possible critically to evaluate its claims based on present reality.

The fundamental problem here, according to Marrow & Brown (1994:151), is that the type of knowledge, which though grounded in linguistics, does not have an empirical status like that of knowledge based on direct observations. Hence, Habermas argues that, it therefore makes sense to use his theory of communicative action to analyse the regular patterns of accurate communication. Habermas's ideas about communicative action examines how agencies within a society seek to reach common understanding, coordinate actions by

reasoned argument, consensus, and cooperation rather than taking premeditated action strictly in pursuit of their own goals (Habermas, 1984: 86). Reasoned argument and informed consensus is to save humanity from the consequences of the unchecked desire to control nature, and this kind of social consensus requires a specific kind of general education (Maddock, 1999).

Habermas provided an academic basis for an idea of planning that accentuates extensive public involvement, disclosing of information to the public, attaining consensus through public discussion instead of application of power, thus avoiding giving opportunity to experts and bureaucrats, and substituting the model of the technical expert with one of the reflective planner (Argyris and Schön, 1974; Schön, 1983; Innes 1995, Lauria and Soll, 1996; Wilson, 1997). In this view, Habermas saw the lawfulness of democracy not only contingent on statutory processes of passing laws, but also in "the discursive quality of the full processes of deliberation leading up to such a result" (Stephen White, 1995:12). That is, the involvement of all key stakeholders in decision-making which affects their lives and livelihoods. This process is very different to the reality of how neo-liberal policies are introduced in countries like Sierra Leone, of course, as this thesis will show.

As with Horkheimer, Habermas also saw democracy as a particular structure of free and open communication. He argues that any form of ideology restricts or limits such processes of communication and undermines the conditions of success within them (Bohman, 2005). Habermas referred to this form of ideology as distorted communication that affects both the social conditions in which democratic discussion takes place and the processes of communication that go on within them. The theory of ideology, as Bohman claims, therefore analyses the ways in which linguistic-symbolic meanings are used to encode, produce, and reproduce relations of power and domination, even within institutional spheres of communication and interaction governed by norms that make democratic ideals explicit in normative procedures and constraints (Bohman, 2005).

Habermas considers the circumstances for discussion as most important in providing an atmosphere without any power field. His concept of ideal deliberative (discursive) democracy, according to Shahramnia (2011), can be considered from two points: first, providing conditions of political participation for all human activists based on critical cognitive interests and effort to access a permanent consensus; second, his democracy discourse and its extension in society based on different attitudes, has an important place in reconstruction of human relations, transactions, and maintenance of rights. Through

Habermas's 'communicative action' theory, social development is observed in finding conditions and situations in which every member of society participates equally in social affairs (Shahramnia, 2011). Shahramnia also asserts that equality and participation in developing policies should result from seeking a broad range of consensus from people; otherwise this is likely to draw criticism of the inequalities and injustices which indicate inappropriate distribution of power in society. For example, the problems of engaging citizens in Sierra Leone in policy formulation when the real nature of their conditions is shaped by lack of education, ill-health and poverty. What role can these citizens play in policy formulation? This is not only a structural problem but also one of power/knowledge as their voices are excluded from the neo-liberal discourse.

As a reconstruction of the potentially correct insights behind Marx's inflated denunciation of liberalism, the theory of distorted communication seeks to provide an understanding of situations where policy documents are used in exercising power even under explicit rules of equality and freedom (Bohman, 2005). For example, powerful economic groups have historically been able to attain their agency goals without explicitly excluding topics from democratic discussion but by implied threats and other non-deliberative means (Przworski & Wallerstein, 1988:12–29; Bohman, 1997:338–339). Such threats include declining investments and blocking redistributive schemes, as a means of circumventing the need to convince others of the reasons for such policies or to put some issues under democratic control (Bohman, 2005). Similarly, biases in agenda-setting within organisations and institutions limit the scope of deliberation and restrict political communication by defining those topics that can successfully become the subject of public agreement (Bohman, 1990). In this way, Bohman argues, it is easy to see how such a reconstructive approach connects directly to social scientific analyses of the consistency of democratic norms with actual political behaviour.

Therefore communicative action, as Habermas has pointed out, is an individual action intended to encourage common understanding in a group and to promote cooperation, as opposed to "strategic action" designed simply to achieve one's personal goals (see Habermas, 1984:85-101, 284-288). In the public sphere citizens should participate in coherent discussion, and Peter Hohendahl notes that, in doing so, they resist the encroachments of the state and the economy on their private lives; and the public sphere "is an essential part of the life world in which people interact and make sense of their lives.... political discourse is understood as a form of communication that is not exclusively defined in terms of interests" (Hohendahl, 1997). The attempt by Habermas to understand society through democratic

means in which form of policy instructions are articulated as communicative discourse is also seen as an emancipatory approach consistent with the concept of critical theory. Thus part of my thesis examines the deliberative aspect of the construction and imposition of neo-liberal policies in Sierra Leone in order to examine the extent to which such deliberation compares with Habermas' ideal.

3.4.3 Robert W. Cox: Critical Theory and a Change in the World Order

The third part of the theoretical framework comes from Robert W. Cox who has made a significant contribution in the field of international relations. The key concept that underpins his work resonates in examining the prevailing world order, that is, asking questions about how prevailing social and world orders come into being; how norms, institutions or practices therefore emerge, and what forces may have the emancipatory potential to change or transform the prevailing order (Cox, 1981). The aspect of critical theory presented by Cox that is relevant to this study is that critical theory does not take the existing world order, institutions, social and power relations for granted but calls them into question by concerning itself with their origins and whether they might be in the process of changing (Cox, 1981:129). This, in my view, represent also another form of critique similar to that presented by Horkheimer and Habermas. Cox considered this form of world order as a system of domination rather than a product of deliberation and democracy, the principles that Horkheimer and Habermas also raised in their work.

Cox believes that hegemonic structure which sustains and reproduces the world order filters through structures of society, economy, culture, gender, ethnicity, class and ideology (Cox, 1997). Hegemony refers to an intersubjective understanding of power and social relations, whereby people in all significant social categories acquiesce in the normality of things as they are (Gramsci, 1971:63). According to Cox, hegemony within a historical structure is constituted on three spheres of activity: first, the social relations of production, encompassing the whole of social relations in material, institutional and discursive forms that engender particular social forces; second, forms of state, consisting of historically contingent state-civil society complexes; and third, world orders which not only represent phases of stability and conflict but also permit scope for thinking about how alternative forms of world order might emerge (Cox, 1981: 135-8). All these three are influential to the intersubjective understanding of power and social relations which makes people submit in the normality of things as they are.

Institutions play a very important role in understanding any historical structure within a society, Cox says. They function to maintain the social order, and are usually a mirror of the prevailing power relations. Institutions can be hegemonic or non-hegemonic (see Cox and Jacobson, 1977). Hegemonic institutions have room for diversity through consensus. This is grounded within a widespread collective view (legitimacy) and hand out rewards to inferior groups without jeopardising the thinking of the leading group. In this way, legitimacy is guaranteed. Non-hegemonic structures are exemplified by the exercise of power in a forced way through the lack of consensus (legitimacy). The existence of hegemony, however, depends not only on institutions but also on material capabilities, ideas and ideology (Cox, 1981:99-100). This is significant because through institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, elites and members of the Sierra Leone Government have been co-opted to adopt neo-liberal policies even though they run counter to the goals of their own populations and of human security. Essentially institutions encapsulate and give voice to the 'universal norms' that are a part of the 'common-sense' ideology (for instance, a liberal world economy) of a hegemonic world order (Cox, 1983). Cox maintained that decision-making processes are weighted in favour of states and social forces that support the hegemonic order. These institutions and their rules are created/shaped by the state (in alliance with other states), for whose benefit the hegemonic order exists (Cox, 1983). As such, they mirror viewpoints that favour dominant state and economic classes.

According to Ünay (2010), international organisations (for example the World Bank, IMF, OECD and WTO and so on) are the primary mechanisms through which universal norms of a world-hegemony are clearly expressed. Cox (1983:137–8) regards international organisations as institutions that serve to maintain hegemony, and also help to legitimate the norms of the existing world order. They reflect orientations favourable to the dominant social forces; thereby defining policy guidelines and supporting certain practices at the national level (Ünay, 2010).

Cox draws upon the work of Karl Polanyi about capitalist societies which is important here. Capitalism, as the French historian Fernand Braudel explained, is not just a way of organising an economy (cf. Cox, 1994) but also, in each of its diverse historical structures, has been a distinct system of values, configuration of consumption, social construct, and kind of state. Each form has also envisaged a conception of world order. Cox (1994) cited Karl Polanyi, whose work was ignored in current neo-liberal economics but who bears rereading for his historical analysis. Polanyi examined what he called substantive economics, meaning economic processes, such as neo-liberalism embedded in specific historical

societies (cf. Cox, 1994), or the way in which societies organise themselves to satisfy their material wants. Cox (1994) distinguished this study from formal economics, which is based upon a methodical departure of economic behaviour from other human activities and is grounded upon certain human characteristics assumed to be universal. Substantive economics orientate thinking in a historical diachronic (concerning language usage over time) direction, while formal economics, in its quest for universally valid rules, follows a synchronic (concerning language usage without using historical context) logic (cf. Cox, 1994).

In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi's (1957) analysis of the development of capitalism from the industrial revolution through the first half of the 20th century, he outlined two main issues (cf. Cox, 1994): (1) He stated that the state was excluded from substantive economic activity, but took on the role of enforcing the rules of the market. The market is assumed to be self-regulating; and its automaticity, through the instrumentality of the 'invisible hand', was seen to promote the general good. (2) Society's response to the socially destructive consequences of the self-regulating market. This response, Polanyi argued, re-legitimated the state as regulator of the economy and as guarantor of a measure of social equity (ibid.). This means that if the delivery of education and health care in Sierra Leone is left to the untrammelled force of the market it will have a very serious consequence for the goal of human security.

Robert Cox's (1981) approach to critical theory which has influenced this work draws upon his tradition of critical theory, the basic premises of which are:

- An awareness that action is never absolutely free but takes place within a framework for action that constitutes its problematic.
- A realisation that not only action but also theory is shaped by the problematic.
- The framework for action changes over time and the principal goal of critical theory is to understand these changes.
- The framework has the form of a historical structure, a particular combination of thought patterns, material conditions, and human institutions which has coherence among its elements. These structures do not determine people's actions in any mechanical sense but constitute the context of habits, pressures, expectations, and constraints within which action takes place.
- The framework or structure within which action takes place is to be viewed, "not from the top in terms of the requisites for its equilibrium or reproduction...but rather from the

bottom or from outside in terms of the conflicts which arise within it and open the possibility for transformation”.

Source: Cox (1981:97).

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined critical theory as the theoretical framework of this study. It has shown how critical theory is derived from a socio-political and emancipatory tradition, and it specifically focuses on seeing knowledge not as discovered as it is given but as acquired through critical discourse and debate. In discussing critical theory, the chapter has also shown that this framework takes an anti-positivist view about society, resonates from the term critique, and also, is a form of science and inquiry because it seeks to understand the relationships of power and the underlying structures that exist in society. It enable us to make sense of the hidden power relations in the way in which knowledge is constituted. This is because knowledge produced in a neo-liberal policy proposal is not neutral. The chapter has drawn also from the influential work of three Critical Theorists: Max Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas and Robert W. Cox and discussed the main concept that underpins their work. Finally, the chapter has also shown the methodology that will be used critically to evaluate the neo-liberal reforms. It takes the form of an emancipatory practice development (EPD) approach that is set within the principles of “realistic evaluation” put forward by Pawson and Tilley.

Chapter 4

Political Practices and the Human Security Crisis in Sierra Leone

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the main political practices by the state that hinder the prospect of improving of human security. It will start with a brief account of the geographic description and language of Sierra Leone; and then proceed to provide an overview of Sierra Leone by examining it from an economic, political and social background. It will then discuss the main political practices in both pre and post-independence era that have, in many ways, undermined the attainment of human security. These are ethno-regional divide; patrimonial-clientelism; and corruption. The study has referred to these practices as ‘Bad Political Practices’ because they inhibit the security of the population, for example in terms of advancing their basic human needs. The importance of examining these practices to the overall thesis is that it sets out the platform in which to examine the various forms of exploitation and domination by subsequent government regimes in Sierra Leone, before the introduction of the neo-liberal reforms (seen as a global development policy and a new form of imperialism), and how this has affected human security. This new form of imperialism, which has manifested itself through the functioning of neo-liberal market policies, is not only seen as an exploitative system but also as an ideology that marginalises people from engaging in policy pluralism, that is, an open and democratic process in which locally-own policies are developed. This is a central theme for critical theory, following Cox, because it seeks to understand what role the state has played in this process. In Chapters 5 and 6, the thesis will be discussing neo-liberalism and human security in more detail in order to critically evaluate the benefits of the reform to the population.

Many scholars have widely written about the state’s capability to further socio-economic development. Clapham (1996:594) for example contended that the state is such an important indicator of the character of the relationship between domestic societies and the global political and economic order, such that the analysis of states may well provide useful insights into those aspects of this relationship which the state may merely reflect rather than significantly influence. A state can only improve the human security of its citizens if it is committed and willing to operate in a way that serves the interest of the majority of its citizens and the country and not the political elites and international institutions.

Bad political practices emerge as a result of the indisputable power structures left behind by the legacy of imperialism that was put forward in a top-down approach. These power structures continue to exist even today and have a direct influence on the possibility of

attaining human security. According to Wilkin (2001) human security is about constructing the kind of institutions, procedures, and structures that would allow all people to take meaningful part in the decisions that shape their lives. The main aim of this chapter is to show that successive government regimes in Sierra Leone have failed to provide the kind of institutions, procedures, and structures that would allow all people do this. It argues that human insecurity arises precisely from existing structures of power/knowledge (Horkheimer, Habermas) and governance system (Cox) that determine who actually benefits from such a system and who does not, an important aspect that critical theory seeks to understand. The study agrees with Thomas (2001) that such structures can be identified at several levels, ranging from the global, regional, state and the local level.

At the heart of critical theory approach is the need to enhance human security and the need to address the concerns of people outside the established constructs of power and system of governance. This mean people outside the establishment, and more specifically, those excluded from accounts of discussions that affect their lives and an attempt to allow a space for their voices to be heard. Such exclusion from critical theory perspective could have a very serious effect in realising the goal of human security. Effective policies requires co-opting democratic values and processes in decision-making. Hence, the extent to which state political practices uses hierarchical forms of regulation and on the relative balance of power between the state and other policy actors in society as Bramwell & Lane (2011) articulates, can be understood using critical theory. The next section provides a brief account of the geographic description and language of Sierra Leone.

4.2 Geographic Description of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is situated in West Africa, surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, Guinea, and Liberia, and enveloping a land area of 71,740 km (27,699 sq. miles). It is a Constitutional Republic with a directly elected president and a single legislature. The country also has a humid temperature with various environment ranging from grassland to rainforests. Its population was estimated at 6.1 million (UN, 2012) with an average annual growth rate of 2.3%. Christianity and Islam are both adequately represented in Sierra Leone and have always co-existed serenely, which made the country one of the utmost religiously forbearing states in the world. According to Nishimuko (2008), religious tolerance has been brought up with a great influence by the Inter-religious Council in Sierra Leone (IRCSL) which played a significant role in ending the war. IRCSL, Nishimuko said, is a national multi-religious organisation committed to promoting cooperation and peace among the religious

communities. It significantly helped out to end the war by facilitating discussions between the government and rebels.

Sierra Leone has a distinctive importance in the history of the intercontinental slave trade. It became Africa's first contemporary state when liberated slaves were moved to Freetown (capital), and it also acts as the exit place for thousands of West African captives. Freetown was founded as a home for repatriated former slaves in 1787 to the early nineteenth century (BBC Monitoring, 18/06/13), from America, Britain and elsewhere in Africa by British philanthropists envisioning a "Province of Freedom", and serving as a beacon of Western civilisation and Christianity in Africa (Davies, 2002:2).

Sierra Leone is divided into four geographical regions: the Northern, Eastern, and Southern Province, and the Western Area; all of which are subdivided into fourteen districts. The districts have their own democratically chosen local government known as District Council, directed by a chairman. The councils (through a process of decentralisation) were reinstated in 2004 after 32 years of central governance. The new drastic Local Government Act of 2004 guarantees that District Councils take control over service provision, finances, and planning in the various districts. Freetown, the biggest city, accommodates the economic, commercial, and political centre of the country.

Over the years, Sierra Leone has depended on mining, particularly diamonds, iron ore, gold, bauxite, rutile, and other minerals for its economic support. For example, the country is among the largest producers of titanium and bauxite, is a major producer of gold and has one of the world's major deposits of rutile (SWAC/OECD, 2011). The latest breakthrough in 2010 of oil and gas that was carried out off the Atlantic coast by Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, a US oil firm, has made the country even more attractive to foreign investment, and also, further strengthening the mortgaging of the countries socio-economic policies to international dictates. Most writers have written about diamonds and other minerals as a curse instead of a blessing that should bring social and economic development to a country. The main concern following this discovery of oil and gas is: what impact will this have in terms of meeting the objectives of human security in Sierra Leone? How will it affect access to affordable and quality education and health care services that are vital to economic growth and human development?

In addition to the above, there are also profuse agrarian and marine resources, and the country has since had an apparently steady democracy that has been gradually strengthened since the end of the war in 2002. It was also considered as the academic hub for West Africa with the first university in sub-Saharan Africa. At independence, while Sierra Leone's

development outlook is regarded as promising, it slowly dwindled away due to bad political practices. The mineral resources according to Francis (1999) has serve as the basis for a rentier system which invariably produces a brand of political class least interested in good governance and economic development. Also, the democratic institutions inherited from colonial rule were progressively dismantled after independence (Zack-Williams, 1999). Other practices include the patrimonial system of governance, corruption and mismanagement of the country's resources and ethno-regional divide and this chapter will discuss them. The country was later classified as one of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the world (HDI Report, 2006). It is also home to the third main natural port on the earth, where shipping from all over the world dock at Freetown's renowned Queen Elizabeth II Quay. Despite this natural wealth, poverty remains widespread with 52.9% of the people living on less than \$1.25 a day (UNDP).

The figure below represents the map of Sierra Leone with twelve (12) Provisional Districts and the Western Area where the capital is located.

Figure 3.0: A Map of Sierra Leone



Source: <http://businessafrica.net/africabiz/countries/sierraleone.php>

4.2.1 Language

The population of Sierra Leone comprises of about sixteen ethnic groups, each with its own language and custom. Even before the emancipated slaves arrived in Freetown, as Davies (2002) pointed out, most of the country's sixteen other indigenous peoples belonging to diverse ethnic and cultural groups had already arrived from somewhere else in West Africa and occupied the hinterland. The immigrated freed slaves evolved as the Creole (commonly called Krios) ethnic group with combination of European and African values. Freetown became a British Crown Colony in 1808, while the surroundings was annexed as a British Protectorate in 1896 (Davies, 2002). The two leading and most dominant ethnic groups are the Temne in the North and the Mende in the South and South-east. The Limba ethnic group, while smaller in size also live adjacent with the Temnes in the North. Although English is the language of instruction in schools and the official language in government administration, the Krio language (derived from English and several indigenous African languages) is the primary language of communication among Sierra Leone's different ethnic groups, and is spoken by 90% of the country's population (The World Fact Book: CIA, 2013). The Krio language unites all the different ethnic groups, especially in their trade and interaction with each other (Oyètádé & Fashole-Luke, 2008). According to Robinson (2008), the national language should be associated with political stability as in the case of Tanzania, or with very good development outcomes as in Botswana. This is not the case in Sierra Leone based on evidence from this study. 53 years after independence the state has failed to provide even the most basic of social services. The next section will illustrate this failure by examining the economic, political and social situations.

4.3 An Overview of Sierra Leone

This section provides an overview of the state of the country under successive government regimes in order to understand the economic, political and social circumstances that have accentuated the human security crisis in Sierra Leone. It will show that bad political practices hinder the state's ability to promote socio-economic development, and this in turn affects the attainment of human security. These practices emerged as a result of the undisputable power structures left behind by the residue of colonialism that was put forward in a top-down approach. It also strengthen the argument made in chapter one that the role of the state and its commitment to socio-economic development is important in order to improve human security.

4.3.1 Economic Context

This section sets out a brief account of the economy of Sierra Leone from an economic perspective. Sierra Leone is a highly indebted poor country with a GDP per capita of US\$341 which is amongst the lowest in the world (World Bank, 2012). Sierra Leone's HDI value for 2012 was 0.359—in the low human development category—positioning the country at 177 out of 187 countries and territories in the world (HDR, 2013). The report also stated that between 1980 and 2012, the country's HDI value increased from 0.255 to 0.359, an increase of 41% or an average annual rise of about 1.1%. It is also a leading example of a country suffering from the resource-curse irony and this is significant here: the paradox of countries with substantial natural resource endowments but facing marginal growth rates and underdevelopment. This paradox was first explored by Sachs and Warner (1995), who found out that economies with a high ratio of natural resource exports since 1971 experienced low growth rates during the period 1971–89 even when controlling important growth-related variables such as trade policy, government efficiency, investment rates and initial per capita income. This study disagrees with Sachs and Warner's analysis because evidence suggests that economic growth, primarily driven by the mining sector production (especially iron ore) in Sierra Leone increased significantly. The African Development Bank Report (2013) shows that real GDP growth accelerated from 6% in 2011 to 16.7% in 2012. As a result of this significant increase, the rate of poverty had decreased by 13% between 2003 (66%) and 2011 to 53%. This is a very impressive statistic and putting this into context, what effect does the increase in economic growth have in terms of improvement in education and health that is supposed to further human security? So, while achieving high economic growth rate is the primary goal of the neo-liberal reform, and one of the mechanism in which human security could be achieved as neo-liberals claim, Perrault et al. (2013) reported that poverty rates are still high in Sierra Leone, and illiteracy and mortality figures yet remain a major concern.

Perälä (2003) also further the resource-curse analysis by focusing on the type of resource endowment, arguing that, in the absence of social cohesion, countries with abundant oil or mineral resources are less likely to experience economic growth than those abundant in agricultural resources. Olsson (2003) also argues that diamond abundance has a U-shaped relationship with economic growth. These cross-country assessments suggest that economic growth, connected to a country's natural resources, represent a central theme that neo-liberal reforms seek to achieve. While this study agrees with the analysis of Perälä and Olsson, it is also important to emphasise that it is the lack of citizen participation in decision-making for

the extraction of these resources and in policy formulation that has resulted in the absence of social cohesion. This is necessary to achieve sustainable economic growth, development and to improve human security. Evidence from interviewed participants suggests that despite the revenue increases resulting from the mining of mineral resources, the government is failing to give priority to the need to improve the education and health sectors (Interviews conducted in Makeni & Freetown, January, 2011). While education and good health are both essential and instrumental in achieving human security, a UN Report in 2005 also recognises that they are important indicator of development and predictors of growth.

A project document for UNDP (2000:3) reported that with the exception of periodic spurs, the post-independence performance of the Sierra Leone economy had exhibited a pattern of continuous deterioration. The report stated that the first decade after independence was a period of relative optimism with growth averaging 4% per annum. By the mid-1970s the economy has experienced a marked decline, with average annual growth hovering around 1%, while the 1980s saw growth averaging about 0.2% per annum (UNDP, 2000). The public sector was not only touched by this declining form of economic growth because of economic mismanagement and corruption, which was alluded to in the opening paragraph as a form of 'Bad Political Practices,' but also because of the fall in the value of raw material. As a result of these practices the mining, agriculture, and manufacturing sectors that the country was dependent upon collapsed (IFAD Report, 2010). One consequence of this down turn in economic activities was a fall in government revenues. The net effect of this budget calamity was to introduce quantitative easing thus leading to hyper-inflation and human insecurity.

The performance of the economy during 1990s was also dismal. In addition to the problems of economic mismanagement and corruption, the war and period of junta rule also played a part, reflecting in an estimated annual decline in nominal GDP of about 25% (IFAD report, 2010). Real GDP per capita peaked in 1970; and dropped sharply by 37% between 1971 and 1989 (IFAD report, 2010:3). The report concluded that by 1990, 82% of the population in Sierra Leone lived below the poverty line. This was ascribed to a practice of benefaction politics, governance and corruption, which represent some key State Political Practices that will be examined later in this chapter. Other factor identified in a UNDP (2000) report was the structure of the Sierra Leone economy, with its strong dependence on the mining sector for foreign exchange earnings, and to a lesser extent on its ubiquitous agricultural sector. This one-dimensional strategy in generating state revenues could have very serious consequences for development projects especially if there is an economic down turn in the

mining sector. The main mineral trades, diamonds and iron ore (at the time), did satisfactorily just after the post-independence epoch and reported a measure of success to the economy. However, by the early 1970s, the size of export of these merchandises began to fall. Even though the result of this development was somewhat disguised by mostly encouraging primary commodity prices present in the 1970s. Furthermore, the dwindling global prices of iron ore hastened the cessation of the iron ore mines in 1975.

In addition to the resource-curse paradox that was discussed above, local institutional agreements for the management of diamonds have also redirected exports from authorised means. This trend was supported by an increasing divergence between the official and parallel market exchange rates (UNDP report, 2000). Such domestic institutional plans permit trade in diamonds to circumvent official channels resulting in a loss of revenue to the state. This represent another mechanism through which state resources are been abused for personal gains by the political elite. Hence, resources that could have been used for investment in education and health care are diverted through unofficial means. For example, official exports of diamonds were recorded at \$81.3 million in 1980 and accounted for about 40% of exports, but by 1988 they had plummeted to \$8.5 million, accounting for less than 8% of exports (UNDP report, 2000). With the downturn in the mining sector, especially the diamond trade, which largely supported the import trade and the embryonic import substitution manufacturing sector, the prosperities of the economy were set on the path of decline.

Given the structure of the economy, much focus is now concentrated on diversification, moving away from diamonds to iron ore, agriculture (mainly coffee and cocoa) and to the service industry. Despite the fact that the agriculture sector performed reasonably well in the 1970s, the revenues resulting from them were not adequate to negate the impact of the decrease in the mining sector, primarily from the diamond industry. Even the agricultural sector itself later submitted to the problems of institutional arrangements for produce marketing and the impact of exchange rate differentials (UNDP report, 2000). Consequently, as a result of the combination of these factors, the report maintained that foreign exchange earnings and the budget were put under pressure. The balance of payments discrepancies continued and intensified, foreign debt arrears increased, expansionary fiscal, monetary policies and currency devaluation augmented inflation and the economy swiftly went out of order. The result of this deteriorating situation was a human security crisis in Sierra Leone. These episodes of economic decline encouraged a profusion of mediations from the Bretton Woods Institutions geared mainly to rectifying macro-economic disparities, modifying

exchange rate disorder, and conserving a viable balance of payment profile. The reform took a market-based approach, and as Barry et al. (1996) have noted, to reform government, restructure the state, and pioneer new modes of government and subjectification. However, in carrying out these reforms the Bretton Woods Institutions failed to learn lessons from the practices of previous government regimes in post-independent Sierra Leone, and the effects of introducing the SAP from other countries. They failed to adopt democratic practices, such as allowing the citizens to participate in policy formulation, a central theme that critical theory is concerned about. The reforms were by and large terminated, until the putting into practice of a series of changes in 1989. This led to the World Bank Structural Adjustment Credit and Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility of the Fund in 1993 and 1994 respectively (World Bank). Performance under these programmes was reckoned to be acceptable, and discussions for continuous facilities were also introduced over the subsequent years. This underscores how the market-based approach subjects the state to comply and implement policies which excludes the participation of other actors in decision-making. From a critical perspective, critical theory sees this as a form of domination and as such criticises this approach in favour of a participatory process that allows the voices and contributions of people to influence the development strategy of a country. Drawing from Horkheimer's work, he described this as a situation in which people and state were succumbing to the rule of increasingly repressive forms of political and economic organisation (Horkheimer, 1978:51).

In 2000, the economy improved reasonably as real GDP increased by 3.8% (IFAD report, 2010:3). Additionally, the price level, registered an increase of 80% during 1998–99, but apparently dropped by 3% in 2000, mainly due to the expansion of external assistance (ibid, 2010). The recovery continued in 2001 as real GDP rose by 5.4%. This was stimulated by increasing consumers and investors' confidence, much greater freedom of movement of people and goods, resettlement and rehabilitation activities, greater agricultural output, the donor-financed expansion of imports, a strong growth of domestic commerce, and increased remittances and investments by the Sierra Leone expatriate community and other investors (ibid, 2010). As this section has shown, economic growth, a central theme of the neo-liberal development policy can sometimes be misleading in understanding the level of poverty and human insecurity in a country. It neither takes into account the distribution of wealth nor does it understand that poverty is a relative concept rather than an absolute one. The next section looks at the political history of Sierra Leone, another factor that is also responsible for economic decline and underdevelopment discussed in the previous section.

4.3.2 Political Context

This section will provide a brief account of the political history of Sierra Leone (for detailed commentary on this see Thompson, 1997; Reno, 1995; Clapham, 1996; Zack-Williams, 1999; Kabia, 2006; and Pham, 2006). It shows and also represents the genesis of the problems that led to the human security crisis in Sierra Leone. The point critical theory will make here is that the neo-liberal account of Sierra Leone and its need to reform, disregarded the historical consequence of colonialism in separating the country and instituting structures of power both material and ideological, which have subsequently helped to shape the choices facing the people of independent Sierra Leone, and indeed of the kind of leaders that the country gets.

The colonial history of Sierra Leone was not placid. The local people staged numerous fruitless uprisings against British rule and Creole domination. Most of the 20th century history of the country was serene, and independence was attained without violence. The 1951 constitution provided a framework for decolonisation ([http://www.aho.afro.who.int/profiles_information/index.php/Sierra Leone:The Health S ystem](http://www.aho.afro.who.int/profiles_information/index.php/Sierra_Leone:The_Health_System)). According to Pham (2006) Sierra Leone inherited from its departing colonial rulers, Britain, a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy that was the envy of the region as well as a healthy foreign reserve account. In 1961 as Pham noted, Sierra Leone became an independent country under the leadership of Sir Milton Margai, the first Prime Minister under the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). He was the first Sierra Leonean of the Protectorate to earn a bachelor's degree from Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone and the first to qualify as a physician (Pham, 2006). Margai's conservative view throughout the Cold War made him a very close associate of Great Britain. He followed a development approach that was state-led and then developed the strong agricultural foundation he inherited. Pham (2006) argues that the economy has also profited from diamond deposits and growing interest in its promising industries, which range from marine to petroleum (Pham, 2006:6). This is important because to advance the course of improving human security, countries that are blessed with natural resources need to use revenues generated, prudently. Furthermore, Thompson and Potter (1997) stated that, at independence the country possessed some of the key infrastructural features associated with a modern state namely: a modern economic structure, a constitutional system of western orientation, a legal system largely modelled after the English common law tradition, an educational system essentially of British orientation, a public service patterned after the public service in England, and a national defence and internal security institution organised along modern lines. Alongside this image

of modernity, Thompson and Potter also pointed out that there were the forces of traditionalism embedded in the country's social system (ibid, 1997). The reason for this they argue, was to create stability between those in the protectorate and the colony of Freetown by providing a framework to govern the country.

A commentator, Thomas Patrick Melady expressed his enthusiastic optimism about the future of the new West African state:

"Sierra Leone can emerge as a showcase of West Africa, progressive in its politics and forward-looking in its policies." (in Pham, 2006).

However, this never turned out to be true as this optimism evaporated instantaneously after independence and the death of Sir Milton Margai in 1964. The declining situation in the political crisis of Sierra Leone began following the general elections of 1967. The SLPP, headed by the deceased's brother, Sir Albert Margai, was closely defeated by the opposition All Peoples' Congress (APC). However, the new Prime Minister, Siaka Probyn Stevens, had barely been sworn in by the Governor-General on March 21, 1967, when the military intervened to stop the transfer of power (Dumbuya, 2011). This underlines the fact that power struggles have been a major reason in the control of the country's resources and politics, and it is a theme which is central to critical theory. After a year in exile, the government of Stevens was restored by a counter military coup. Many commentators have argued that this led to Steven's personalised, brutal and corrupt rule until 1985 when he pensioned off and transferred power to his chosen successor, head of the Sierra Leone Army, Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh.

In 1971, Stevens used a legally questionable legislative manoeuvre in order to amend the Sierra Leonean constitution, substituting the parliamentary democracy with a highly-centralised presidential system (Thompson, 1995:107-108). Several years later, as Thompson observes, he held and used a farcical referendum to transform it into a one-party state with the APC as the only legal political organisation. This system has excluded and marginalised many Sierra Leoneans, preventing them from participating in decision-making which affects their human security. Following Cox and Habermas, because critical theory is rooted in the felt needs and sufferings of people, Fay (1975:94) noted that, it is absolutely necessary that a Critical Theorist should understand these actors from their own points of view.

According to Richards (2002) Sierra Leone went from being an exemplary for democratic governance and economic success, which it had been under Sir Milton Margai, to being an example par excellence of Africa's post-colonial "neo-patrimonial" malaise, whereby *"national resources were redistributed as marks of personal favour to followers who respond with loyalty to the leader rather than to the institution that the leader represents"* (cf. Pham, 2006:73). One major consequence of this post-colonial malaise was the increase in inequality it created. William Reno described Sierra Leone as a state that has degenerated into a "shadow state", that is, one govern by a system of personal rule, founded on neither concepts of legitimacy nor even governmental institutions, but on the control of markets and on the ruler's ability to manipulate access to resources created by those markets, so as to enhance his own power (Reno, 1995). For example Francis (1999) argues that, the mineral resources in countries like Sierra Leone has serve as the basis for a rentier system which invariably produces a brand of political class least interested in governance and economic development.

The collapse of the economy continued under the leadership of Joseph Momoh, thus continuing the existing political, economic, and social problems. The former United States ambassador to Sierra Leone, John Hirsch (2001:30), reported:

Unpaid civil servants desperate to keep their families fed ransacked their offices, stealing furniture typewriters, and light fixtures...One observer has noted that the government hit bottom when it stopped paying schoolteachers and the education system collapsed. Without their salaries, teachers sought fees from the parents to prepare their children for their exams. With only professional families able to pay these fees, many children ended up on the streets without either education or economic opportunity (cf. Pham, 2006:74). A situation that has increased human security.

Momoh's fragile government further accelerated the collapse of the economy. Two significant events happened in 1991. First, the neglect of the wishes of young people and the eventual collapse of the economy led to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel war on 21st March, 1991. This movement was led by Foday Sankoh, a charming ex-Sierra Leonean army corporal who had been jailed for several years in the 1970s for his part in an alleged plot against the Stevens regime (Pham, 2006:74). Pham stated that when Sankoh left prison he and a small group of Sierra Leonean dissidents, subsequently underwent military training in Libya and later returned to invade the eastern part of Sierra Leone from Liberia. Initially, Sankoh persuaded this small group of Sierra Leonean revolutionists with his justification for

free education and medical services. He also apparently fought to address the problem of inequality in Sierra Leonean society in which the APC regime continued to exploit the country's rich diamond resources for the benefit of its elite cadre, while the living standards and human security of the rest of the citizenry declined (Pham, 2006). Sankoh was also backed by the insurgents waging war for Charles Taylor in neighbouring Liberia. Regardless of fighting for justice and equality, however, the RUF later involved in unlawful diamond business after taking hold of the diamond fields in most of the eastern part of the country. Sankoh controlled the country by employing terror tactics, such as amputating the limbs of civilians who opposed him, allowing the systematic rape of women and girls, and by the abduction of young boys to increase the number of his fighters (Pham, 2006). All these acts represented significant human right abuses.

A survey conducted by Humphreys and Weinstein to investigate the motivation of ex-combatants and non-combatants who fought for the RUF indicated that personal greed and grievances played an important role in creating the circumstances that led to the conflict (cf. Robinson, 2008). This, Humphreys and Weinstein argued, stemmed from the exclusion and inequality inherent in the patrimonial style of politics which characterised the country prior to 1991, and also from more deep seated animosities due to elements of the local traditional political and economic structure of the society, such as dominance of chiefs over resources and assets (cf. Robinson, 2008). While Humphreys and Weinstein analysis is accepted, evidence from this study also suggests that such practices are still continuing as proxies for poverty and inequality, thus perpetuating the cycle of human insecurity.

Second, in 1991, a new multi-party constitution was launched that ended the one-party rule, but elections planned for 1992 were abandoned by a military coup of young junior officers. They formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) and this was led by Captain Strasser. The multi-party constitution stayed in suspension because of the civil conflict until in 1996 when the first democratic election was conducted. The APC government, led by Stevens and Momoh, failed to prioritise the social needs of the citizens through unprofessional use of state resources, poor governance, and marginalisation of rural communities thus deepening the human security crisis. The result of this dysfunctional political practices engendered widespread dissatisfaction and frustration, discontent particularly among young people and the deprived sections of society. The resulting malaise was believed to partly explain the rebel uprising in 1991. Bates (1981, 1983) stated that the self-seeking unconstrained elite sacrificing public for personal interest are often blamed for poor policy (cited in Davies, 2002).

Hence, the civil conflict brought not only a breakdown of civil and political authority, but also a human tragedy: over 50,000 people were killed; 2 million displaced; and thousands injured or maimed; with human rights abuses including abduction of women and children (PRSP document, 2005). Most of the country's social, economic, and physical infrastructures were obliterated. Activities in agriculture and mining, which characterised the foundation of the economy, were basically brought to a standstill. Widespread spate of malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS were rife, and school enrolment fell significantly. This highlighted an enormous scale of human insecurity as poverty became pervasive and intensified.

The coup was well-liked at the time as most Sierra Leoneans had nurtured frustration with the APC's unethical and incompetent rule. While the military administration guaranteed to end the war and bring success to the people of Sierra Leone, this promise was far from being achieved. Hence, cynicism at the amateur ruler's failure to end the war as well as his ever more dictatorial rule led to his ousted in January 1996, by his deputy, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Under growing external and internal pressure, the new Sierra Leonean leader, Bio, was obliged to conduct elections which were shunned and occasionally disrupted by the RUF. Despite various hiccups, the election took place and was won, after two rounds, by the newly-revived SLPP, led by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah (late), a veteran UNDP official, who became the country's first directly elected head of state (Pham, 2006:75). The new democratic government swiftly embarked on wide-ranging programmes geared to achieving a lasting peace, establishing mechanisms for good governance, post-war rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement with the help of the international community (Pham, 2006).

The new government, continuing with previous peace treaties started by the NPRC, signed a peace agreement with the RUF in November 1996 (Abidjan Peace Accord). Less than six months after the adoption of that agreement, the army pugnaciously toppled the legitimately elected government, on 25th May, 1997. Incarcerated Army Officer, Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who was released during this coup, became the head of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The RUF was immediately asked to join members of the national army, who took over the control of power. Amid widespread criticism by the international community and persistent civil defiance, the Army/RUF junta barely hang on to power and perpetrated terror on the people of Sierra Leone, until they were removed militarily from office in February 1998 by Nigerian, led ECOMOG forces. Pham (2006) noted that the restoration of the Kabbah government was done by the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the British-based firm, Sandline International. Pham

argues that they were hired by the exiled president Kabbah to launch an offensive against the combined AFRC/RUF forces in 1998. During that process, many ordinary citizens were killed, 800 Nigerian peacekeepers died and the operation ended up costing the government of Nigeria \$1 million daily (Pham, 2006). This colossal spending from the Nigerian government as Pham observes, made the government of Nigeria announce the withdrawal of its forces and forced the government of Sierra Leone and the AFRC/RUF to enter negotiations which resulted in July 7th Lome Peace Agreement signed in the Togolese capital in 2006.

Following its coming back to office, the legitimate government recommenced its attempts to transform the institutions for good governance, which were fundamental to the development and peace process, achieving human security and also responding to the desires of post-war reconstruction. These reforms were facilitated and supported by the help of the international community, especially the World Bank and the IMF, and this led to the introduction of neo-liberal reforms. These included the creation of the Anti-Corruption Commission, reform of the judiciary, deregulation, privatisation, decentralisation, and the establishment of more civil society groups to act as checks and balances necessary for a free and democratic society. However, these reforms, driven by the international community also failed to adopt democratic processes (open debate in policy formulation) in decision-making, and did not learn from the effect of the existing structures of power. This omission affects the governance process even today, and is a major concern for critical theory. Cox's work (1987:284) is relevant in this case as he points out that, the internal structures of states are adjusted so that each state can best transform the global consensus into national policy and practice. He saw this as a form of domination rather than as an outcome of deliberation and democracy. He therefore argued that, institutions play a very important role in understanding the historical structure within a society, and are usually a mirror of the prevailing power relations that exist. This adjustment excludes a wider range of stakeholders participating in crucial social, political and economic decision-making (Bakker & Gill, 2003). Power according to Lee (2001) goes beyond hierarchies, exertion of hegemonic control, authority and capacity for action, to also include status, reputation, negotiation and struggle over resources as was illustrated above. This failure from a critical theory point of view, to learn from earlier events in order to shape the future of the country continues to result in the worsening of the human security situation and, therefore, increase inequality in access to basic services.

Since the end of the civil conflict in January 2002 and after the second election of May 2002, Sierra Leone has made outstanding improvement in strengthening the peace. A key achievement was the enactment of the Local Government Act in 2004, which sets out decentralisation policy, and subsequently, the successful conduct in May 2004 of the first Local Government elections for over three decades, and consequently in 2007 and 2012, presidential and parliamentary elections were held. Enormous external support has assisted the country to gradually improve, but complete recovery to pre-war periods will need sustained external support and the government's commitment to actually mobilise and use its own resources and external funding judiciously. Moreover, both domestic and foreign actors need to adopt democratic practices that allow people to participate in reforming, formulating and implementing policies themselves, rather than having them imposed by the international community. Then such problems as the broken social, economic and physical infrastructure can be tackled by those who have been affected. Even the UN now recognises that participation, is the very principle of democracy, and participation from all levels enhances group values, lessens conflicts, and nurtures peace. It allows communities and citizens to express their concerns and provides opportunities for officials to explain policies and build support (UN, 2005). It is argued that this dependence on external support or assistance, the inability of the state to institute a governance framework that works for everyone, and the failure to learn lessons from the past has led the country's policies to be externally determined. Thus exclusion of citizens from decision-making is seen as an act of control by Critical Theorists. Cox identifies the following as key elements of his transformational schema: establishment of a vibrant civil society, emergence of organic intellectuals representing the marginalised, development of community-level cohesion, participatory democracy, and non-violent methods of conflict resolution, pluralism and multilateralism.

4.3.3 Social Context

This section looks at the social consequences directly related to the economic and political history discussed above. The main aim here is to show how this historical form of development and political strategy by the state has undermined the achievement of human security. It also shows that the role of the state is important in advancing the objective of improving it.

Since the end of the civil conflict in Sierra Leone, there has been marginal progress toward the reduction of poverty. Evidence from the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey in

2011 (SLIHS, 2011) indicated a decrease in the poverty rate, from 66% in 2003 to 52.9% in 2011, with the decline being felt more in urban than in rural areas. Despite these improvements, it is argued that there are significant challenges to socio-economic development, characterised by the country's political structure. The survey noted that an important factor in explaining this survey result is to consider the annualised 1.6% per capita increase in real household expenditure from 2003 to 2011. Urban poverty according to the survey declined from 46.9% in 2003 to 31.2% in 2011. District level poverty analysis showed that by 2011 most districts had converged to poverty levels between 50% and 60%, with the exception of Freetown at 20.7%, and 64% of households in the top two quintiles were found in the western urban areas (SLIHS, 2011).

In terms of access to improved water source only 40% of the rural population have access compared to Guinea with 59% of its rural population, and in Ivory Coast the figure is 66% (SLIHS, 2011). In the case of sanitation, the survey result also shows that only 13% of its population have access to improved sanitation compared to Guinea, which has 19%, Liberia 32%, Ivory Coast 24% and the sub-Saharan Africa's average for access to sanitation is 39%. These figures shows that the extent of the human security crisis is not only limited to education and health care, which this thesis focuses upon, but also to the lack of access to improved water and sanitation. The population of the youth below the age of 25 years stands at 63% (SLIHS, 2011). The civil war has made a significant section of this population not capable of acquiring even basic education or job-related skills, thereby adding more challenges to their incorporation into the small formal labour market in Sierra Leone. With youth unemployment, as the survey reported, projected to reach over 70%, considerable disparities still exist.

State spending on health and education fell by 60% from 1980 to 1987 (Reno, 1998). This was associated with personal greed and unethical behaviour by many writers. For example, Reno highlighted that Stevens hosted an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) conference that consumed the equivalent of a year's government spending, and he eventually built a personal fortune estimated at about \$500 million. Even with isolated gains nationally, the mineral trade boost is still connected with poor health and education outcomes locally. Education and health expenditures grew more slowly than GDP and population, and declined relative to GDP (DACO, 2008). Although per capita health expenditure increased from \$9.40 to \$13.50 during 2003–07 (WHO recommends \$34 per capita). Health indicators remained among the world's worst. In 2008, the under-five and maternal mortality rates were 140 per 1,000 and 857 per 100,000 live births, respectively; malaria mortality was 154 per 100,000

(GoSL, 2010; WHO, 2010). For every 100,000 live births, the report says 890 women die from pregnancy related causes; and the infant mortality rate is 104.2 per 1000 live births.

Even though primary and secondary school enrolment doubled between 2000 and 2007 mostly through aid (World Bank, 2007), only 9.5% of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education compared with 20.4% of their male counterparts (SLIHS, 2011). Despite having the highest share of wealthy households (21%) in the Eastern Region, Kono District had the lowest access to secondary education (7.3%), adult literacy below national levels (31% versus 39.8%), and low access to medical services (24% versus 45.5% and 43.3% nationally and for the Eastern Region, respectively) (DACO/SLIS, 2008).

Women continue to experience significant disparities in terms of literacy rates, access to land, and legal protection. According to a Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Among Women (CEDAW) survey in 2009, 63% of women in urban areas and 84% in rural areas are engaged in the informal sector, deprived from reaching their potential by poor and unequal access to land (based on customary practices), skills training, appropriate technology, functional literacy and information on markets and finance. Female participation in the labour market as the survey observes stands at 66.3% compared to 69.1% for males. Women have also made progress to achieve gender equality in key decision-making positions; they currently occupy 12.9% of parliamentary seats. The TRC Report (2004) recommended 30% quota for women's political participation and representation. This was also specified in Article 7 of CEDAW. This brief account of the social problems which exist in Sierra Leone today show that their roots relate back to the historical political strategies by successive leaders that were discussed earlier in this chapter. These created an unequal power relations which exacerbated inequality and lack of access to social services. With this in mind, did the neo-liberal reforms actually address these problems? This question will be explored in subsequent chapters of the thesis. The next section examines state practices that have undermined the aim of achieving human security.

4.4 Political Practices and their Effects in Sierra Leone

This section examines three key political practices: ethno-regional divide, patrimonial-clientelism and political corruption, which have undermined human security and percolated all aspects of state-society relations in Sierra Leone. Leaders based their exercise of political power on control over production and exchange rather than on mobilising populations through effective state institutions (Reno, 1998). It highlights various forms of exploitation and domination perpetuated by subsequent government regimes, indicating the extent of the

role played by local actors, including the state and this is a central theme that critical theory seek to understand. Cox considers states as the “focal terrains of domestic and international conflict” and “institutional means of coordinated action” (Sinclair, 1996:3). Cox argues that this represents an opportunity to break with the political structures of the past and thus the potential to escape from the criticisms that bind human potential.

4.4.1 Ethno-Regional Divide

Sierra Leone’s recent political history has reflected the ethno-regional division created by the legacy of colonialism. According to Hirsch (2001:24), this situation, influenced by the colonial rulers and politicians represents the root cause of the state’s progressive collapse in the nearly five decades since independence in 1961. Critical theory reject such instrumental manipulation of political conditions because of it profound implications on human security. It also underscores growing and widespread concerns associated with poverty and the lack of access to education and health care. Predating independence, the first division was between the Krios, constituting only 2% of the population, and living in the colony, now the Western Area of Freetown and its environs; and the other 15 indigenous ethnic groups in the Protectorate (Davies, 2002:12).

In his paper prepared for Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) 5th Annual Conference: *Understanding Poverty and Growth in Africa*, Davies attributed colonialism as having created the ethno-regional division which is reflected in the political system in Sierra Leone today. With this system, Davies claim that the British have kept the Krios and indigenous people well apart for well over a century through direct colonial rule for the Krios in the colony, and an indirect rule for the Protectorate after its annexation in 1896. Three important issues need highlighting here after the annexation of the Protectorate in 1896. First, the British created an environment for political competition between the Krios in the colony and the people in the protectorate, by allocating a limited number of seats to Africans in the colonial legislative council (Davies, 2002). Second, in addition to this competition, the political institutions in the 1950s according to Robinson (2008:4), were designed to ensure that the well-educated Krios would not control the politics of a newly independent Sierra Leone. Third, Davies (2002) argues that because the Krios were well-educated and are employed in strategic positions in the public service, they were part of the professional elite and were seen as a risk to the colonial government and other ethnic groups. This strategy by the British was an indication of how discrimination and use of power to reform the political system can be manipulated in the hope it will serve their own best interest. From a critical theory perspective, power works to dominate, alienate and marginalise certain

individuals and groups through modern social, political and economic practice (Abel & Sementelli, 2002).

This ethno-regional division before independence has sown the seed of grievances among the population. According to Davies (2002), even though independence and majority rule politically handicapped the Krios, and weakening the significance of the Krio-Protectorate divide, it also generated a north-south-east divide with people from each region accounting for roughly half the total population. Since then, the political landscape has largely been dominated by two political parties, the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) and the All People's Congress (APC). The SLPP is associated with the south-eastern region and is home to the Mendes (a local ethnic group) comprising about 30% of the population. The APC is associated with the northern region and is home to the Temnes (a local ethnic group) who constitute about 30% of the population (Davies, 2002:12). This division has led to in the allocation of development projects favouring whichever party is in power. This is still reflected in the political system today.

Other evidence that supports the ethno-regional divide is that government policy has historically been urban-biased. According to Lipton (1979) and Bates (1981) urban bias arose because the biggest threat to the political stability of most African regimes stemmed from urban discontent. Therefore, despite 90% of the pre-war population living in rural areas, modern amenities such as electricity, telecommunications facilities, pipe-borne water supply, and improved health and education facilities have been located only in the urban areas, especially in Freetown (Davies, 2002:14). This approach affected agriculture and other rural economic activity, weakening growth and reinforcing poverty. For example subventions on rice imports, direct and indirect taxation on agriculture, and the lack of infrastructure, deprived rural economic activity, and reduced rural incomes. Consequently the rural population recoiled further into low-income subsistence, while others migrated to towns and diamond-mining areas thus affecting the formal economy.

4.4.2 Patrimonial and Clientelism

This section examines how neo-patrimonialism, an informalised power structure, that enables elite consolidation of power and rent-seeking behaviour has destroyed the effectiveness of most state institutions. It is argued that neo-patrimonialism represent a political system in which the external form and institutions of a legitimate coherent state are in place, but where the real power lies on a profoundly entrenched patrimonial logic, a colloquial power relations founded on patron-client relationships, favouritism and loyalty.

According to Bratton and van de Walle (1997) it is based on three core characteristics: presidentialism, clientelism and the lack of distinction between public and private (corruption). Boas & Jennings (2005:386) argue that, this is not good for ordinary citizens as the aim of the administration is to create and sustain the structures and power relations that are generally considered to undermine human security in order to retain profit for itself. This political practice by powerful actors and elites determines who enjoys access to state resources and what services are provided to the citizens. O'Donnell (1992:47) argues that this political system dominated by 'clientelism and personal relations' poses serious obstacles to the institutionalisation of state institutions. Institutionalisation 'is a means of stabilising and perpetuating a particular order' (Cox and Sinclair, 1996:99). Such practices support a system that has partial or no representative function or accountability. Therefore no efforts are made in constructing and consolidating the institutions that could challenge the predominance of patrimonialism and clientelism.

These patron–client relationships have persistently shaped the centre–periphery relations as critical theory has pointed out, creating a dysfunctional state (Rubin, 1995). State elites had to enter into complex relationships of co-option, compromise and incorporation with peripheral forces, which then determine the authority, power and legitimacy of the central government (Saikal, 2005:196; Shahrani, 1998:226). It has also now entered into relations with major external actors (political, economic and civil society NGOs) that incorporate it more fully into normal patterns of global governance, as Cox has written. From an economist's viewpoint this arrangement provides inducements for rent-seeking and manipulation. Reno (2006:7) described this as a predatory behaviour on the part of elites that enabled them to prey upon otherwise productive citizens and appropriate for themselves the assets of the state.

Stevens had created extensive patronage network since 1970s through which he had personally distributed the proceeds of the country's mineral wealth to his allies (Reno, 1998:117). For example Reno explained how diamonds had generated about \$200 million in profits in the formal economy before Stevens became president, or about 30% of national output, and had provided 70% of foreign exchange reserves. However, by 1987, Reno claimed that the diamonds that passed through the formal taxable channels were valued at only \$100,000. He argues that Stevens and several of his associates, foremost amongst them being Jamil Said Mohamed, a Lebanese trader born in Sierra Leone, appropriated much of the rest. Reno also stated that they diverted profits and assets from other state enterprises, most notably from oil and rice marketing. In doing so they destroyed the usefulness of most

state institutions, preventing them of official sources of revenue and turning them into expansions of their private patronage networks. They also influenced state control of the economy to undermine competing private enterprises that claimed a share of the profits from trade. The majority of state revenues that were still collected went into the pockets of politicians and their associates. According to Reno, this fortune underscored the importance of patronage linkages that each succeeding president tried to copy and extends them.

From my brief analogy above, patronage politics therefore represented a strategy in which citizens are marginalised, and economic and social opportunities controlled as an instrument to control people. From a critical theory perspective this is a form of domination and exploitation that has its roots in material factors (wealth, control of jobs and access to privileged services – health, educations, etc.) and ideational factors (national populist ideology underpinning state power, the legitimacy of political elites, a patriarchal culture and so on). Cox's work is crucial in setting these tendencies in the world order into both a local and a global framework. According to Boa's & Jennings (2005:392) the decisions about distribution and redistribution based on this rent-seeking behaviour, deprives the majority of the population because they take place outside the official state structures and are private and informal. While this strategy is effective in constructing the power base of elites, the study agrees with Reno (2002:840) that it also undermines the capacity of the state to provide basic services to the wider population. In Sierra Leone for example, the legitimisation of election victories is not centred around proper and effective policies but on the dominant parties' capacity to pursue power and material advantage to maintain neo-patrimonial networks (Bratton & van de Walle, 1994:458/59). The pursuit of such power and material benefit enriches the security of those exerting power but generate insecurities for everyone else.

Robinson (2008) argues that in a state where the administrative systems have become dominated by informal or neo-patrimonial politics, state institutions may be unable to provide sufficient administrative structures to carry out even basic state functions. Post-independent leaders and politicians in Sierra Leone as Robinson observes, were less interested in providing the most basic elementary things which can make a society prosper, such as access to affordable and high quality education and health care than in accruing wealth for themselves. He acknowledged that this is an attractive strategy for politicians to stay in power, and that this general unaccountability of the political class has led to a high degree of kleptocracy (see Cartwright 1970; Clapham 1976). In such cases of perverse clientelism, the political logic of the system diverts state authority from developing effective

policy objectives to the pursuit of private wealth and power (see van de Walle, 2001; Ellis et al., 1999; Chabal & Jean-Pascal, 1999).

Holding public office and controlling of the state represents a way of amassing wealth and power. In analysing the political benefits of controlling and having access to state offices in developing countries, Christopher Clapham (1985:40) noted:

“...control over the state is the one central thing which politics is about, where the state provides a source of power and wealth entirely disproportionate to that available from any other organised force within the society, the quest for state power takes on a pathological dimension...control over the state is a prize which can be fought for, and therefore is.”

Therefore Patrimonial and Clientelism is a bad political practice that undermines the hope of achieving human security and devastates the efficacy of most state institutions.

4.4.3 Political Corruption

The existence of widespread political corruption and its debilitating result has been widely acknowledged and represents another major factor that affects socio-economic development and the effective governance of a country. The subject as Gerring & Thacker (2005) noted, has rightly captured a rapidly growing share of public and academic attention, in part because of the recognition of its intrinsic importance, and also because of its close relationship with economic growth, investment, the rule of law, political accountability, political institutions, and human security generally. Corruption impairs good governance and development and represents a major internal political problem in Sierra Leone. Critical theory charges that the concept of corrupt practices raises issues of governance and power that increases inequality. Poor governance is characterised by widespread corruption. Some scholars have attributed the phenomenon of administrative corruption in Sierra Leone to lack of political accountability. Highlighting its extensiveness, Kpundeh observes that:

“The pervasive nature of corruption in almost every kind of activity, and the reluctance of the nation’s leaders to systematically fight this widespread malaise, allowed questionable practices to continue and has eventually become an institutionalised way of life for Sierra Leoneans. Consequently, the culture of corruption enabled the governing class to attain economic domination and exercise their power, and the whole bureaucratic structure was converted into an instrument of self-endorsement by prominent civil servant” (Kpundeh, 1994).

The victory of the APC in the 2007 election resulted from popular dissatisfaction with the Kabbah government over service delivery and corrupt practices; even though the Kabbah government won credit both domestically and internationally for leading the country out of civil war (International Crisis Group report, 2008). This was evident in the UN Secretary-General's report that:

“There is a general perception that the government's inability to deliver basic services or respond to the needs of the population is due to corruption and mismanagement of public resources, and has become a source of tension” (First report of the SC on UNAMSIL, 2006).

This view supports Kpundeh's study in 1994 and the findings of the Judicial Commissions show conclusively that during the period of 1971 to 1992, those who were in authority in Sierra Leone failed to manage the country's resources effectively for public purposes. Government resources were usurped by the governing elite and their supporters for personal gains and profit at the expense of the majority of the population. This form of political practice destroys both the effectiveness of state institutions and the provision of basic services to the population.

Chetwynd et al. (2003:12) assert that countries experiencing chronic poverty are seen as natural breeding grounds for systemic corruption, because there is no proper mechanism for the accountability of state resources. To illustrate this further, they use a governance model to demonstrate how corruption creates poverty by influencing governance factors, which, in turn, affect poverty levels. Their analysis resulted in the following three findings: first, corruption reduces governance capacity, that is, it weakens political institutions and citizen participation and leads to lower quality government services and infrastructure. The poor bear the brunt from reduced public services, hence higher school dropout rates and high levels of infant mortality. Chetwynd et al. argue that when health and basic education spending are given inferior priority, for example, in favour of capital intensive programs that offer more opportunities for high-level rent-seeking, lower income groups lose services on which they depend. Second, impaired governance increases poverty by restricting economic growth and, coming full circle, by its inability to control corruption. Third, corruption that reduces governance capacity may also inflict critical collateral damage, reducing public trust in government institutions. As trust, an important element of social capital, is eroded, research has shown that the vulnerability of the poor increases as their economic productivity is affected. When people perceive that the social system is untrustworthy and inequitable, their incentive to engage in productive economic activities declines.

As government revenues fall through leakage brought on by corruption, public funds for poverty programs and programs to stimulate growth also become scarce. Gupta, Davoodi & Tiongson (2000) used regression analysis across a large sample of countries to assess an aggregate measure of education outcomes and health status. They did this by using a model that included several indicators namely corruption, per capita income, public spending on health care and education, and average years of education completed. The results supported the proposition that better health care and education outcomes are positively correlated with lower corruption.

Iftekharuzzaman (2005) notes that corruption prevents development, undermines democracy and governance, prevents the rule of law, distort market and stifles economic growth, creates and perpetuates social and economic deprivation and inequality, leads to violation of basic and constitutional human rights, breeds crime, social frustration, discontent and insecurity. As the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan once stated:

“This evil phenomenon (corruption) is found in all countries, big and small, rich and poor, but it is in developing world that its effects are more destructive. Corruption hurts the poor disproportionately by diverting funds intended for development, undermining a government’s ability to provide basic services, feeding inequality and injustice, and discouraging foreign investment and aid. Corruption is a key element in economic performance, and major obstacle to poverty alleviation and development” (IMF working paper, 1998).

Corruption, by its very nature, noted by Iftekharuzzaman, is about undermining fairness and competition, and about disproportionality and inequality (2005). According to Iftekharuzzaman, it affects the poor both directly and indirectly by exacerbating their insecurity. Directly through increasing the cost of key public services targeted to them, lowering the quality of such services and limiting or even preventing the poor’s access to essential services such as education, health, and justices. Indirectly by diverting government resources away from the social sectors. While it affects everyone, the poor are the most vulnerable because they are easy victims of bribery, extortion, and intimidation (Iftekharuzzaman, 2005).

Thompson & Potter (1997) also argue that, modernisation is a primary predisposing factor for governmental corruption, in the sense that, it contributes to the creation of new sources of wealth and power, which bear no relation to the dominant traditional norms of the society. These modern norms are unacceptable to the dominant groups in the society. In Sierra Leone,

Thompson and Potter observed that, the rise of the new governing elite after independence was accompanied by a corresponding creation of new avenues of wealth and power, with enormous possibilities for widespread corruption within the public services over which they gained ascendancy. In addition, in evolving democracies, they argue that modernisation always leads to the formation of governmental bureaucracies with an increase in government controlled activities and the potential for massive and rampant corruption.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown that the state remains an important actor in improving the human security of its citizens. This is important because bad political practices by the state undermine socio-economic development and increases human insecurity. It shows how the political, economic and social malaise perpetuated by subsequent government administrations has failed to provide the kind of institutions, procedures, and structures needed for the effective functioning of state institutions. This supports the thesis assertion that human insecurity results directly from the existing structures of power/knowledge, and that it is the governance system that determines who actually benefits and who does not, an important aspect that critical theory seeks to understand. Lessons are yet to be learnt even with the introduction of the neo-liberal reforms. As the subsequent chapters and evidence from interviewed participants will show, the reforms have failed to adopt democratic values and processes in decision-making that will make policies and politics effective.

State actors have exercised various ways of exploiting the nation's wealth and political dominance over the population for their own personal interest, through such strategies as ethno-regional divide, patrimonial-clientelism network and political corruption. While these practices emerge as a result of the unquestionable power structures left behind by the legacy of colonialism that was put forward in a top-down fashion. They have further been corrupted since the death of Sir Milton Margai in 1964 as a result of the unethical behaviour of the political elites. Successive governments that have ruled the country have remained corrupt. Critical theory is important as through the work of Cox, in particular, we can begin to understand the relationship between local political practices in Sierra Leone and their relationship to much wider processes of global governance. It is at the global level, after all, where neo-liberalism is most strongly embedded in institutions such as the WTO, IMF and the World Bank.

Chapter 5

Neo-liberalism: A Global Development Strategy

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of neo-liberalism from the point of view of critical theory. It shows how the construction of neo-liberalism as a form of power/knowledge, governance and ideology has become a discourse of global common sense that frames policy options as though they were natural or not to be questioned, and yet serve to reinforce interests of the dominant national and international elites. Therefore, this chapter examines neo-liberalism as:

- a) A form of power-knowledge – an ideological framework that emphasises the power of social, economic and political elites over social and economic policies that subordinate the populations of nation-states.
- b) A form of social science-neutral policy – which in fact is a form of power/knowledge that builds the interests of political and economic elites into its ‘science’ of economics. Thus as a science it cannot be challenged and claims to be an ‘absolute truth’ akin to the laws of gravity.
- c) An anti-democracy, because it places power in the hands of elites and technocrats who make decisions on behalf of the public who are too ill-informed or uneducated to have an opinion – the very antithesis of Habermas’ ideas of deliberative democracy. This erosion of democracy has been a particular concern for both Habermas and Cox.
- d) A form of global governance that takes power out of the hands of ordinary people and into the hands of the complex formation of global elites that, although largely rooted in the global north, assert their power by co-opting elites in the global south. This is then sold to politicians and citizens of the south as a form of ‘good governance’ which says that the problems they face (poverty, ill health, lack of education and so on.) is of their own making and which they can mend only by adopting neo-liberal policies.

But the reality is that the neo-liberal policies are not a universal science but a form of power/knowledge that reinforce inequality and poverty that shape so much of the global south including Sierra Leone.

5.2 The Evolution and Transformation of Neo-liberalism

This section examines the emergence of neo-liberalism and how it has come to dominate the political landscape globally as a political and economic policy framework for social and economic development. It has profoundly altered the prevailing pre-conditions of the economic structure of Third World countries. The political economy of the present neo-liberalism arose mostly as a response to the policies and institutions of the state-led economic development model that existed in many evolving countries as a result of the Great Depression of the 1930s and WWII. The dominant economic and political theories were Fordism, Keynesianism, and the welfare state model (Ruthjersen, 2007). It is argued that the collapse of the Fordist and Keynesian economic paradigms is a major reason in explaining why neo-liberal policies has been widely embraced, particularly by developed countries over the past few decades. Neo-liberalism has become a framework, as Broomhill (2001) argues, for the rationalisation and restructuring of the obsolete components of the Fordist and Keynesian model. The next section provides a brief account of the previous development models.

5.2.1 Fordist Model

The Fordist model was the dominant capitalist model in the mid-20th century (Smith, 2000:1, 3). According to Jessop, it was developed in the United States, but spread to Europe and other part of the world, aided by the political power and hegemony of the United States (in Smith, 2000:1). Following Cox's thesis, critical theory does not consider an order in which a dominant state exploits others, but one which will be perceived by at least the major subordinate states as compatible with their interests. Cox sees the world-hegemony as a social structure, an economic structure and a political structure; and it emerges as a result of a widely appreciated sense of supremacy in the inter-state system and global political economy, as well as social and ecological systems (Cox, 1996b, 136). The Fordist model is concerned with the mass production of commodities in large firms, and conditioning the emergence of the mass consumer market (Ruthjersen, 2007), with a specific focus on market and economic profit. Scientific management theories were introduced as a way to control the production and labour force, as well as making the production more efficient (Smith, 2000).

5.2.2 Keynesian Model

During the long boom of the post-war period, successful capital accumulation was supported by Keynesian macro-economic policies through the development of a welfare state; corporatist class arrangements between capital, labour, and the state; and government intervention to promote investment, stability and consumption (Lipietz, 1987). It was developed by the British economist, John Maynard Keynes with a focus on achieving full employment. Amin & Malmberg (1994:242) describes it as a model of macro-economic management of the national economy. It emphasised the interventionist and responsible role of the state in the management of economic growth (Quiggin, 1997) and human development. Keynes was concerned that there is no automatic tendency in the market economy to ensure the level of output corresponding to that which would sustain full employment. Instead, Keynes argued that the state should be responsible for managing the overall level of expenditure in pursuit of full employment. Following this approach, as Keynes said, would ensure state provision of goods and services to the entire population, such as education and health, and will be understood as a means of ensuring social well-being to the public (Larner, 2000:3).

5.2.3 Welfare Model

The welfare state model, on the other hand, was another leading ideology practised mostly in Western countries, and became well-known in the 20th century with its origin dating as far back as before WWI (see George, 1999:4; Pierson & Castle, 2000:20). This approach allows the state to take up the responsibility of protecting the health and well-being of its citizens, based on the idea that all citizens have a right to basic services such as education, health care and welfare (Henriksen & Vetlesen, 2000:19). In essence, it was introduced to enhance income security and provide services for the majority of the citizens from poorer socio-economic background (Lindbeck, 2004:2). It is observed as a way of tackling distinct systems of class and power relations that are widespread in many societies. Government intervention was additionally seen as a way of stabilising the national economy and avoiding market failures (Folland et al., 2007:407). Nevertheless, it is also argued that the welfare state policies and practices often penalise and humiliate welfare recipients. Rutherford (2007), for example, argued that this model does not guarantee a reduction in inequalities or develop egalitarianism and social rights, and it is not certain that it will offer protection for those who suffer the most and are in need of such support. However, it has become embedded in people's everyday lives (Esping-Andersen, 1990:141).

The development models discussed above have been challenged since the 1970s by the emergence of neo-liberal agenda, particularly so, at a time when Western societies came under immense economic pressure from critics of state intervention and Keynesian economics (Yergen & Stanislaw 2002). The OPEC hike in oil prices in 1973 accelerated a change from a Fordist to a post-Fordist system of accumulation and method of regulation. This overlapped with a crunch of capitalism and, then, the fall and ultimate breakdown of Soviet communism. This change in policy was inspired by the theories and research of Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek which encourage the dismantling of government management of the economy, and this has, over time, been accepted by a large group of the political spectrum (Friedman and Schwartz, 1963). Since then, we have been led to believe that ‘neo-liberalism’ has dominated macro-economic policy-making, and has been adopted as a development strategy, as indicated by the tendency towards less severe state regulations on the economy, and greater emphasis on stability in economic policy rather than goals made familiar by Keynes and Beveridge, such as full employment and the alleviation of abject poverty (cf. Thorsen, 2009).

Among other consequences, McGuigan (2005) points out that, it is an attack on organised labour in older industrialised capitalist states and devolution of much manufacturing to the much cheaper labour markets and poor working conditions of newly-industrialising countries. This global transformation was facilitated and speeded up by developments in information and communication technologies (Castells, 1996). Therefore, the neo-liberal model emerged as a response to the post-war Fordist/Keynesian economic and political practices, and also as a reaction against the welfare state influenced by intellectuals from the right-wing (Gamble, 2006:22, Harvey, 2005:20-21).

5.2.4 Neo-liberalism

The term ‘neo-liberalism’ is made up of two components: “neo” meaning new and “liberal” meaning free from government intervention. The free market enterprise now represent the most proficient way of distributing resources in an economic system. The transition from one hegemonic model to another is a shift towards a political agenda that is not only favoured by the unregulated operations of the free markets (Larner, 2000:4), but also seen as a radical attempt to find solution to the economic crisis of the 1970s (Offe, 2000:68-69). Neo-liberals argue that the growth in state expenditures and deficits, which many countries experienced due to the development of the welfare state, and the demand by the large labour unions for higher wages, were seen as destructive for the economy (Bessant et al., 2006:140).

Neo-liberalism is often seen as identical with the term ‘Washington Consensus’, first devised by John Williamson in 1989 to describe a list of specific policy reforms by experts from the IMF, the World Bank, the US Federal Reserve, and the US Congress which took place in Washington in the midst of the crisis within socialism (Williamson, 2004). The main objective of the reforms is to integrate those countries emerging from the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and African countries that have accrued huge amount of debts, into the market economy (Foe, 2008). The economies of most of these countries were also centrally-planned. Although it started as a political and economic ideology, neo-liberalism has now infiltrated social policies as well, including education and health throughout the world. It requires nation-state governments to focus more on acting as economic growth promoters for their national economies and on creating macro-economic stability rather than on improving human security (Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Lingard, 2000; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002). It began to be widely used under the Thatcher government in the UK and the Reagan administration in the USA (McChesney, 1999) in the early 1980s, and its thinking was swayed by neo-classical economic theory.

5.3 The Development of Neo-liberalism as a Historical Discourse

Critical theory enables us to follow the development of liberalism and neo-liberalism as a historical discourse and an ideological framework for understanding and making sense of the world. In its original form classical liberalism as part of the enlightenment movement, argued in terms of the good society as being one which mirrors and aims to achieve equality, universality and egalitarian principles in the rights of all people. In contrast neo-liberalism has surfaced since the 1970s with a connected but ultimately somewhat different agenda, one which establishes inequality, profits and the power of markets society, democracy and human rights. Critical theory will help us to understand how this transformation took place and how it represents the changing interests of the world’s dominant political, economic and military elites.

Freedom and democracy, as Critical Theorists argue, represent the primary values of liberalism. According to Gray (1995), the word ‘liberal’ took on a specifically political meaning with the establishment of liberal parliamentary caucuses, first in Sweden and Spain, and then all over Europe, at the beginning of the 19th century. Liberalism, Thorsen (2009) points out, is a set of political theories which emphasise two things: first, that individual ought to be free to choose between different options in life-defining decisions. Second, that society ought to be subjected to the rule of law and to a democratic form of governance.

These are values that, critical theory reveals, could lead to the liberation of people from authoritarian power structures. They stem from the work of Adam Smith who advocated a minimal role for government in economic affairs so that trade could flourish (McGregor, 2001:2). He argued that this has changed the mind set of liberal economics for almost 200 years. It was briefly substituted in the 1930s by Keynesian economics after the Great Depression, and WWII which saw the need for government intervention in the market economy. However, in the 1970s, liberalism or the call for market deregulation, state decentralisation, privatisation, and minimal government intervention in the market economy re-emerged, and hence the name “renewed liberalism” or “neo-liberalism.”

5.3.1 Types of Liberalism

There are two types of liberalism: “classical” and “modern” liberalism. Classical liberalism, Thorsen (2009) argues, is associated with earlier liberals such as John Locke, Adam Smith and Alexis de Tocqueville. Neo-liberalism is more strongly connected with individuals such as Milton Friedman (strong advocate of the free, competitive market and personal freedom), Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich von Hayek (strong advocate of free market and liberty), see Harvey (2005:8, 20) and Rutherford (1992:203). These latter writers argued that market is the key to the spread of and success of democracy, prosperity and human freedom (Callahan & Wasunna, 2006:10-11). However, this study challenges this claim, as will be shown later in the chapter. For neo-liberals the function of the state ought to be minimal, which means that practically everything except the armed forces, law enforcement and other ‘non-excludable goods’, ought to be left to the unregulated dealings of what its citizens, organisations, and corporations spontaneously choose to establish and take part in (Thorsen, 2009). It has advocated perfect competition in free markets and marginal government intervention as the best way for macro-economic stabilisation and economic growth (Goodin et al., 1999:126-128; Quiggin, 1997: 9-11).

Modern liberalism, on the other hand, is characterised by a greater willingness to let the state become an active participant in the economy (Thorsen, 2009), and that supports this study’s argument. ‘Classical’ or ‘economic’ liberals support laissez-faire economic policies since it is assumed that they result to more freedom or real democracy. Modern liberals tend to claim that this analysis is inadequate and confusing, and that the state must play a significant role in the economy if the most basic liberal goals and purposes are to be turned into reality. Modern liberalism is situated politically to the left of classical liberalism, and in the centre of the political spectrum, because, it tends to create a society considered to be more equitable

(cf. Beveridge 1944; 1945; Rawls 1993). It is also willing to utilise the state as a mechanism for redistribution of wealth and power.

Therefore the emergence of neo-liberalism can be traced back to classical liberalism, a historical discourse advocated by Adam Smith, and to the specific conception of man and society on which he founds his economic theories (Clarke, 2005). It is considered a completely new concept for economic theory and policy-making. Further, it is seen as the ideology behind the most recent stage in the development of capitalist society, and at the same time a resurgence of the economic theories of Smith and his scholarly successors in the 19th century, mainly David Ricardo and supporters of 'Manchester liberalism' such as Richard Cobden and John Bright.

5.4 International Organisations Involved in Institutionalising the Neo-liberal Ideology

This section examines the role played by different international organisations in institutionalising the neo-liberal concept. It is important because they are the primary mechanisms through which universal norms of a world-hegemony are clearly expressed (Ünay, 2010). The neo-liberal ideology was also further facilitated by the underlining trade discussions such as GATT, trade agreements within the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) (Ruthjersen, 2007). These agreements, according to Ravenhill, are believed to have facilitated the spread of free markets, free movements of capital funds, private investment, and the limitation of national restrictions on business (in Bell & Head, 2004:83). Cox cites five major characteristics of international institutions, expressing their hegemonic role in stabilising and perpetuating a particular global order. He argues that international institutions:

- (a) Embody the rules which facilitate the expansion of dominant economic and social forces, but at the same time permit adjustments to be made by subordinate interests with minimum pain.
- (b) Are generally initiated by the particular state which establishes the hegemony. At the very least, Cox said, they must have the state's support in trying to secure the international hierarchy of powers through influencing the decision-making processes directly or indirectly.
- (c) Ideologically legitimise the norms of the existing world order; they reflect orientations favourable to the dominant social forces, thereby defining policy guidelines and supporting certain practices at the national level.

- (d) Tend to recruit and co-opt elite talent from peripheral countries in a process Cox called “transformismo”. To describe the recruitment of outstanding personalities from the periphery to the central organisational hierarchies in order to allow them to internalise and transfer elements of modernisation into their local settings.
- (e) Simultaneously serves to absorb potentially counter-hegemonic ideas from ‘transformismo’ and recapitulate them to be consistent with the hegemonic doctrine

Source: Cox (1996b:138).

These characteristics highlight how power structures have aligned the state to serve the interest of the hegemony bloc in the spread of the neo-liberal ideology. Cox emphasises the importance of standing aside from the prevailing order and asking how that order came about; and of calling into question the nature and origins of institutions and their social relations, how they might change (Cox, 1981:88-89), and the importance of studying the past and creating new groups with which to comprehend alterations in social relations.

5.4.1 The World Trade Organisation

The WTO consists of 159 member countries (WTO, 2013) and controls 97% of the world trade (see Harvey, 2005:3; WTO, 2005:7-8). Its main functions are to ensure that world trade flows as freely as possible, to promote competition in open markets, and to achieve economic growth through free trade (WTO, 2005:7-8). The argument for this approach is that it will result in a more flourishing, peaceful world and would improve the welfare of its member countries. The WTO report in 2005 also argues that free trade agreements will allow the earth’s resources to be used more efficiently. This is an indication of how neo-liberal ideas are underpinning the work of one of the world’s most powerful and influential organisations. WTO agreements, Harvey (2005:66) claims, are crucial to advancing the neo-liberal ideology on a global scale as they guarantee international agreements between states regarding freedom of trade.

According to McNally, WTO agreements have clauses under which private corporations can punish governments that refuse to follow WTO stipulations, for example by putting the needs of their people as the top priority instead of the promotion of the free market (cf. Sachikonye, 2010). This is a sign of the domination and exercise of power that critical theory is concerned about. The legitimisation of neo-liberalism by such institutions has made it mandatory for developing countries to adopt and follow its policies. Sachikonye (2010) stated that a nation-state which fails to conform to these norms, faces an indirect threat of the

withholding of loans and capital which are absolutely vital for its development. As Burchill (2005:76) put it, developing societies are expected to embrace the free market blueprint, opening up their economies to foreign investment, financial de-regulation, reductions in government expenditure and budgetary deficits, the privatisation of government-owned enterprises, the abolition of protection and subsidies, and developing export-oriented economies. Otherwise they risk the withholding of much-needed aid and finance.

Negotiations of trade and services agreements through WTO have a great influence on education and health care services around the world, and are conducted under GATT and other agreements of the WTO (see WTO, 2005:33-34; Schrader, 2005). For example, GATT is committed to progressive liberalisation of health services by encouraging practices such as health tourism (by which people from one country receive treatment by health care services in another country), foreign private investment and management of public and private education and health care services, movement of health and education personnel across borders and international trade (Labonte, 2003:487). The WTO indicated that liberalising education and health care does not affect governments' right to set a level of quality, safety, price, or to introduce regulations to pursue any policy objective they see fit (WTO, 2005). This study disagrees with this view because, in practice, any attempt by a government to set prices, for example, is seen as a way of distorting the market. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) is another WTO agreement, which is highly disputed especially in relation to patented medicines (Bloche & Jungman, 2007:251). Jamison argued that owing to its influence over trade in medical supplies, insurance and health services, the WTO is now becoming one of the most influential international organisations in regards to trade, and, in particular, health worldwide (cf. Schrader, 2005:34).

5.4.2 The IMF and the World Bank

Similarly, the IMF, World Bank, OECD, EU and so on are also influential in the spread of the neo-liberal ideology to developing countries. Their Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) since the 1980s, and the restructuring plans they have imposed on countries, especially those in Africa and Latin America, that borrowed money for development purpose (Bourdieu, 1998; Cote et al., 2007; de Siqueira, 2005; Giroux, 2002; Klees, 2008; Toedoro, 2003) has affected human security and development. This is evident in Sierra Leone where the World Bank's Joint Countries Assistance Strategy (JCAS) with the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) and the International Financial Corporation (IFC) introduces neo-liberal

policies disguised as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme. But in reality they are creating an environment that benefits private businesses. This is done through the resources they provided to the Government of Sierra Leone in supporting its national budget.

It is argued that these institutions are adopting a top-down hierarchical approach to the design and implementation of development policy and imposing their will and conditions on national governments. Ünay (2010:47) contend that high-ranking developmental technocrats, rather than public officials, ordinary citizens and civil society institutions from the borrowers, determined the policy priorities of these organisations. Moreover, he claimed that strict conditionality of bank loans, which were frequently incorporated into IMF-led structural adjustment packages, has created significant pressures on the borrowing states. By doing so, they have instituted a form of governance that take power out of the hands of politicians and ordinary people into the hands of the complex formation of global elites that serves their own interests. Following Cox and Habermas theses, this oppressive power structure is a form of domination, and they, like Horkheimer, argue for a more eclectic approach which takes the form of a bottom-up framework that include the participation of the population.

Wilkin (2002) noted that “aid is being tied to a commitment to principles of transparency, accountability and the auditing of governments’ financial and political credentials. These mechanisms of discipline and self-discipline, are key norms in the neo-liberal global governance agenda, establishing universal goals for all states to adhere to.” The World Bank, for example, has often demanded health care reforms such as decentralisation and user-charges as conditions for loans, as well as influencing the commercialisation of health care services in general through promoting cost-sharing, private provision or partnerships in health care services (Ollila, 2005:188). The objective of the SAP has been to promote economic growth through macro-economic stability and elimination of market distortion (Bremner & Shelton, 2007:219), as well as to increase the reliance on private markets as an alternative to state-owned public welfare programmes and industries (Power & Faden, 2006:100). This approach has cause serious misery to the population of Sierra Leone. The Government of Sierra Leone’s policy document, Agenda for Change 2008-2012 (PRSPII) revealed that:

“Over 60% (revised to 52.9% in 2013) of our people are unable to afford one decent meal a day. This abject poverty is compounded by significant problems in the health and education

sectors. As a result Sierra Leone has consistently ranked at the very bottom of the UN Human Development Index.”

This underscores the scale of human insecurity that Sierra Leoneans faces.

The governance of education and health is also significantly influence by the IMF and the World Bank instead of the state. According to Robertson & Dele (2008), they have been very active in promoting policies that constitute education and health as a new services sector and market. They argue that in 2002, the Bank, together with the OECD, hosted a major conference on education and the General Agreement in Tariffs and Trade. This was followed in 2003 with a major policy initiative ‘*Lifelong Learning for the Global Knowledge Economy*’ where the Bank argued that the access and quality agendas of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should be met through the development of public-private partnerships, and opening up education to for-profit firms (see also Tooley, 2003), as part of the neo-liberal reforms. These processes of commodification of education and health, Robertson and Dele claimed, represent a significant erosion of education and health as constituting a public good and public sector.

Furthermore, the media have also been very influential in promoting the neo-liberal ideology. The notion of economic efficiency, material welfare, and unlimited progress for the human race are often presented and promoted via the media (Gill, 2003:125). Therefore, in addition to the role played by the IMF and the World Bank, communication and information technologies and globalisation have played an important role in enabling neo-liberalism to make an impact worldwide (Ruthjersen, 2007).

5.5 A Critical Theory Analysis of Neo-liberalism

This section provides a critical analysis of how neo-liberalism has become a body of power/knowledge (thought), ideology and a form of governance through which public policy is formulated. It is seen as a discourse through which power is not only exercised but also in which various forms of subordination are manifested that could have an influence in inhibiting the objective of human security in Sierra Leone. According to Levinson, a discourse is a mode of action, in which people may act upon the world and, especially, upon each other, as well as a mode of representation (cf. Fairclough, 1992:63). He maintained that discourse is shaped and constrained by social structure in the widest sense at all levels: by class and other social relations at a societal level, by relations specific to particular institutions such as law or education, by systems of classification, and by various norms and

conventions of both a discursive and non-discursive nature (Fairclough, 1992:64). In this section, the study takes three key themes from critical theory to analyse neo-liberalism; it looks at neo-liberalism as a discourse of power/knowledge, an ideology, and as a form of governance.

Neo-liberalism is the prevailing political and economic paradigm in the world today, and has been described as an ideological “monoculture”, in that, when neo-liberal policies are criticised a common response is that “there is no alternative (TINA)” (Ross & Gibson, ed., 2007). Neo-liberalism, as Francesco Strazzari (2010) stated, has become a hegemonic orthodoxy, meaning, a mainstream global development policy. Unlike traditional liberal thought, he said that in its most radical variant, the new discourse saw society and politics as endogenous vis-à-vis the market, which was conceived as the product of individual performing practices and strategies. Even though the name itself is mostly unused by the public, for example in the United States, Great Britain, and many other countries, McChesney (1998:7) argues that it references something that everyone is familiar with, its policies and process:

“Whereby a relatively handful of private interests are permitted to control as much as possible of social life in order to maximise their personal profit.”

According to Ross & Gibson (ed., 2007), neo-liberalism is embraced by parties across the political spectrum in that the interest of wealthy investors and large corporations define social and economic policy. This has made neo-liberalism a much more complex global development policy paradigm, and, as commented in the research conducted by MultiPart’s Work Package 4b (WP4b, 2010),

“With neo-liberalism, development is top-down; it is typically built on pre-existing pilot experiences which have become ‘ready-made templates’ exported and adopted from other contexts. This raises a number of dilemmas concerning adaptation to specific time and space contexts, as well as footprint and ownership.”

Other scholars such as Aheame (2009) have also branded neo-liberalism as:

“One-size-fits all approach to economic policy.”

These comments emphasise the need for policies to be owned locally by the citizens and their politicians, backed by the political will.

5.5.1 Neo-liberalism: A Discourse of Knowledge, Language and Power

The first theme that this study has taken from critical theory in analysing neo-liberalism is as a discourse of knowledge, language and power. Following in particular Cox, Horkheimer and Habermas, the study employed the concept of power/knowledge in order to understand how specific forms of power have been used by international institutions, and to establish and understand specific forms of knowledge and language in the spread of the neo-liberal discourse. In this structure, a hegemonic ideology serves the class interests of capital by stressing that private property and capital accumulation are essential to economic growth (Gill, 1993). It was Gramsci who brought the idea of ‘hegemony’ to the conceptualisation of power, that is, the power of a ruling class exercised more by coercion, including propaganda and manipulation, than by its intellectual and moral capacity to win the consent of its people (Cox & Sinclair, 1996). Gramsci saw hegemony as the superimposition of an ideology as it sought to construct a whole lived reality that would allow the existing socio-economic structures to be taken for granted by the people.

Moolakkattu (2009) argued that the self-regulating market subordinated the society to an economic logic, making people vulnerable to forces over which they had no control. This is, in fact, a form of power/knowledge that secretes the interests of political and economic elites into its ‘science’ of economics. As Cox himself said, the internal structures of states are adjusted so that each can best transform the global consensus into national policy and practice (Cox, 1987: 254). He therefore develops a ‘historical mode of thought’, capable of understanding the actors and structures found in a particular period of history for transformation. This ‘historical mode of thought’ according to Cox, links a global governance framework of neo-liberalism to specific national and local structures of governance and in the case of Sierra Leone, incorporation into the world order.

According to Mohamed (2006), the production of knowledge through the influence of power is not seen as objective, rational, de-contextualised, or ahistorical but as influenced by hierarchical arrangements in society. These provisions, from a critical theory perspective, determine what counts as knowledge and whose opinions are heard. The neo-liberal discourse, as a specific form of knowledge, has taken the form of a set of policy prescriptions, consisting of key policies such as deregulation, privatisation and decentralisation as part of the neo-liberal reforms introduced in the education and health sector in Sierra Leone. These policies have been put forward by so-called technical experts within these international institutions with very little or no input from either Sierra Leone’s

Parliament or her citizens. Bakker & Gill (2003:57) posit that compliance to such policies has been achieved under the weight of international debt-repayment schemes, Structural Adjustment Programmes, and, more recently, the poverty reduction strategy programmes. This new arrangement turns mandatory control over designated national policy fields to foreign constitution-like agreements that expedite the promotion of global capitalism. Hence, Fossey et al. (2002) argue that such knowledge is not seen as discovered by objective inquiry but needs to be acquired through critical discourse and debate.

The work of Robert Cox influences my analysis here because his concept of critical theory focuses on how the prevailing world order does not take institutions, social and power relations for granted but calls them into question, by concerning itself with their origins and whether they might be in the process of changing (Cox 1981: 129). For Cox, hegemony provides a useful way of conceptualising and investigating political and ideological dimensions of discursive practice. The relevance of his work to this study is that it encourages critical examination of the claims made by neo-liberals, including those concerned with policies of privatisation and decentralisation mentioned earlier. It also encourages questioning of how these policies were formed in the first place, and whether they were imposed undemocratically upon the Sierra Leonean Government and why.

The main argument put forward by international institutions for introducing these reforms in Sierra Leone is that it could make education and health not only accessible but also affordable and of better quality. Cox believes that hegemony filters through structures of society, economy, culture, gender, ethnicity, class and ideology (Cox, 1997). Essentially institutions encapsulate and give voice to the 'universal norms' that are a part of the 'common-sense' ideology (for instance, a liberal world economy) of a hegemonic world order and it is in this way that neo-liberal ideas take root on national and local societies (Cox, 1983). Also, politicians and top civil servants tend to be recruited from amongst the establishment because of the very form of the state itself and the wider structural constraints within which it operates (Crossley, 2005:216). Because of this, Cox argues that, decision-making processes are biased in favour of state and social forces that support the hegemonic order. In supporting Cox's view, Mahao (2006) concluded that critical theory does not only trace knowledge from history, but also questions how forms of knowledge come into being, arguing that power and interests have a direct influence on the type of knowledge produced.

To understand further how power and interests have a direct influence on the type of knowledge produced, Mahao (2006) argues that this requires the need to connect values and

interests with the operation of power in the process of producing knowledge, as Cox has suggested. Because power is in the hands of certain social interest groups, for example international institutions, its sustainability depends on the ideas or knowledge offered by these international institutions, and on its effect on economic and social development. Also, because there is a general consistency between ways of explanation and the use of power, Cox argues that it is important to find out what kind of knowledge is given by the present world order. Because knowledge is explained according to the way the domain needs it, Cox believes that it is diluted by the interests and values of the dominant mode of production (Mahao, 2006).

5.5.1.1 Understanding the Concept of Power

Power is manifested in various contexts. Following Schutz (2001:22), we can see power as the aptitude to achieve something, to affect, influence, or dominate people, political or military authority or control. On the other hand, Crossley (2005:213) defined power as a fixed capacity which enables an agent or set of agents to impose their will on another agent or set of agents, with or without the consent of the latter. However, the analysis of power has focused on the question of “who has power” and “how power is gained”, and this has, in many respects, undermined the achievement of the goal of human security. To examine this, I am turning to Steven Lukes’ 3-D approach and Michel Foucault’s concept of power to explain the “who” and “how” aspects of power. Although these two are not Critical Theorists, their concept of power is useful here in shedding light on how power manifests itself through structures of society.

Steven Lukes develops what he calls a three-dimensional methodology for power analysis that focuses on the ‘who’ questions of power. While each methodology varies in the approach it adopts, all three focus upon decision-making. The one-dimensional approach, which Lukes associates with the work of Dahl (1961), focuses upon the decision reached and upon the interested parties who have expressed opinions relevant to the decision (Crossley, 2005:216). In this way, Lukes says, we would be able to compare the views and opinions of all stakeholders against the final decision reached. Luke argues that this theory about power supports the view that power is disseminated through a wide range of groups in society, rather than a select elite group. The two-dimensional approach, which Lukes associates with the work of Bacharach & Baratz (1970), focuses upon potential decisions, posited by various agents and groups, which do not make it onto the decision-makers’ agenda. When these non-decisions or suppressed possibilities are taken into account, Lukes

argues, the evidence tends to point more in the direction of 'elite' theories of power, that is, power concentrated in the hands of a specific group or groups. Finally, Lukes' three-dimensional approach illustrates the invisible restraints upon the airing of opinions. The very fact that nobody protests or visibly dissents, in conditions where otherwise they would, indicates the hidden, non-observable workings of power. Therefore, all these three forms of power illustrated by Lukes indicate that power is concentrated in the hands of a few people, thus excluding the voices of the majority of the citizens in decision-making.

Similarly, Crossley (2005:218) also argues that while Foucault is critical of the liberal and democratic pretensions of modern western societies, he turns his focus away from the activities of decision-making bodies to the micro-mechanisms of power which operate, often unperceived, in everyday life and which, in his view, underpin the liberal order. Power for Foucault is the result of a range of different forms of 'social technologies' or 'techniques' which operate to govern, control and shape human beings in a variety of ways, although often provoking resistance. According to Crossley (2005), Foucault argues that there is a dual relationship between power and knowledge in modern society. On the one hand, the techniques of power are developed on the basis of knowledge which is generated, for example by neo-liberal discourse; on the other hand, the techniques are very much concerned with exercising power in the process of gathering knowledge. Foucault refers to this modern form of power as 'bio-power', and argues that this has brought 'life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made power/knowledge an agent of transformation of human life' (Foucault, 1981:143). Foucault's concept of power is relevant to the types of discourse which have become silent in modern society, and which seem to be closely associated with its modes of social organisation and cultural values.

All these types of power have been used in various forms in neo-liberalism. For example, Taylor claims that neo-liberalism has been advanced through the purposeful use of specific language describing concepts such as 'the consumer', 'free choice', 'individual freedom', and through the language of management theories and practices (governance), and of economics (in Ruthjersen, 2007). Thus, the language of neo-liberalism has become a medium of power and social practice in which forms of subordination are manifested, as Robert Cox has pointed out. While discourse and language are at the heart of social practices and processes, Fairclough argues that discursive practice is manifested in linguistic form, for example in the way in which texts are put together and interpreted, how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed in a wider sense, and the nature of the social practice in terms of its relation to social structures and struggles (Fairclough, 1992). This reflects the way in

which the neo-liberal reforms are put together in the form of text in policy documents. Cox's critical theory shows that particular structuring of the relationships between words and the meanings of words are forms of hegemony.

Thus, policies underpinned by a neo-liberal agenda often subject the majority of people to market forces even as these policies maintain social protection for the most able in society, such as highly-skilled workers or those with inherited wealth and corporate capital; and the current neo-liberal dominance is increasingly characterised by oligopoly, protection for the strong and market discipline for the weak (Gill, 2003:123-125). Horkheimer described the market reforms as the continuing strengthening of proprietorship and power in society. From a critical theory perspective, he argued that there is need to criticise such a system in order to change the undemocratic ways in which the reforms have been introduced. This is because neo-liberalism is seen as a political practice that favours the most powerful and rich people and nations, and excludes the majority of people. Critical theory seeks to change such practices because they disempower the marginalised and reinforce social inequalities. To this end Richardson describes neo-liberalism as "an ideology of the powerful" (cf. Slaughter, 2005:39).

Similarly, neo-liberalism promotes a view that the real power of sovereignty lies with the consumers in the free market (Smith, 2000:78; Von Mises, 1996:129/130). Smith (2000:84) maintains that this is a peculiar view, as the firms that produce the goods and services often use strong manipulative advertising mechanisms to convince consumers of the value of the goods or services (cf. Ruthjersen, 2007). This is a sign that neo-liberalism has transferred power from the authority of governments who are supposedly answerable to the public and towards private corporations and financial markets. According to Smith, this creates a power asymmetry between consumers and businesses, in which the power is often in favour of businesses. For example, education and health care services provided by private institutions are considered to be far better in terms of quality than those provided by public institutions. While this is a myth associated with the neo-liberal reforms, it raises the question of why does a government not invest in improving public institutions to be more competitive with private institutions in delivering these services. Improving public institutions requires not only more spending on education and health investment and conditions of service, but also development of policies locally (participatory approach to policy-making), as neo-liberals do not support increased spending in improving public services in education and health care.

Following Habermas's thesis, manipulative marketing instruments to persuade consumers of the value of the goods or services are employed using 'inaccurate forms of communication' that allow the gradual social institutionalisation of reason in society in support of businesses. Therefore, Habermas considered reasoned argument and consensus as the basis for individual and group emancipation, (see Habermas, 1984). In contrast however, the free market is meant to free us from power struggles as "buyer and seller are expected to meet equally free to choose and with full knowledge from among all possible alternatives, deciding whether to exchange, and on what terms, fully voluntarily" (Schutz, 2001:41).

Nevertheless, real opportunities to attain purchasing power are often greatly unequal due to differences in wealth or social position, creating inequality in access to services such as education and health, and, as noted earlier, the notion of the consumer being fully informed is dubious (Schutz, 2001:160-161). Schutz explained that a perfect, competitive, free market economy is a utopian project, and the world consists of a complexity of unequal conditions and power relations, which makes it difficult to realise this model in practice. This complexity of unequal conditions and power relations that exists in neo-liberalism is exactly what critical theory seeks to understand. In concluding, therefore, critical theory is influenced by multi-disciplinary research, identifying several sites of oppression, domination and injustice in order to enhance human emancipation, and also, according to Kellner (1989), to attempt to construct a systemic, comprehensive social theory that can confront the key social and political problems of the day.

5.5.2 Neo-liberalism: A Form of Ideology

The second theme of this study examines critical theory as a way of evaluating neo-liberalism as a form of ideology. The concept of ideology has also been very influential in the debate about neo-liberalism, because ideology reinforces the use of power as an instrument of oppression or exploitation. McGuigan (2005) argued that ideology mediates economics and culture. He stated that the concept of "ideology" refers to how dominant power relations and inequalities are legitimised by misleading representations of reality at various levels. The concept of "ideology" is used here to refer to inaccurate information driven by uneven power relations. For example, Nafstad et al. (2007) argue that ideologies are fundamental vehicles of power as they serve to control the positive or negative ways of how individuals and groups adapt to their environments. Bakker & Gills (2003) posit that a consideration of the ideological features of neo-liberalism is a necessary supplement to the

economic analysis of the globalisation of neo-liberal ideology. Fairclough (1992:87) contends that, ideologies are significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination. Fairclough provides a clear distinction between discourse as a mode of political practice and discourse as ideological practice (Fairclough, 1992). As a political practice, Fairclough argues that discourse establishes, sustains and changes power relations, and the collective entities of, for example, communities or groups between which power relations are obtained. Discourse as an ideological practice constitutes, naturalises, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations. In both practices, however, Fairclough observes that power is seen as instrumental in developing and spreading a particular kind of knowledge. In the case of the neo-liberal reforms introduced in education and health care in Sierra Leone, the people of Sierra Leone have very little input in the policies that constitutes the reforms, thus subjecting the masses to a form of domination and injustice that critical theory tends to investigate.

Moreover, this global free market ideology, according to Nafstad et al. (2007), is grounded in the power of multinational corporations arguing for free trade as a means of removing political and governmental rules and regulations that may inhibit the movements of goods, services and capital across borders. The market increasingly replaces the state as the principal regulatory force in society (Touraine, 2001). Thus, the modern individual finds himself in a world characterised by an increasingly pervasive globalised ideology of competition, freedom from others, self-fulfilment and consumerism, taking place within a so-called free market (Bauman, 2000; Giddens, 1991; Gledhill, 2004; Nafstad, 2003, 2005, 2006; Stiglitz, 2002). Drawing from Cox's work, Nafstad et al. (2007:314) argue that this would enable us to understand the issue of how societal arrangements of power and social order at the macro level incorporate certain views or ideas of social practices and of individual human nature.

Cox's work also influences this study's analysis of ideology, because it exposes the unfair way in which ideologies are formed (neo-liberalism) and diffused in society, and this tends to inhibit the goal of human security. Cox believes that ideology operates through conception of hegemony. While such ideology characterises abstract theories enunciated by so-called professional experts in international institutions, McGuigan (2005) argued that "everyday language" and "common sense" exemplify the operations of ideology most profoundly in

securing consent to prevailing and otherwise questionable arrangements. In supporting Cox view, Guess (1981) wrote that “the very heart of the critical theory of society is its criticism of ideology.” Guess explained that ideology is what prevents the ordinary people in society from correctly perceiving their true situation and real interests, and he argued that “if the people are to free themselves from social repression, they must rid themselves of ideological illusion” (pp. 2-3). For Cox, a critical analysis of neo-liberalism must begin by exploring how people in society understand ideological control of policies led by international institutions that affect their human security. Neo-liberal ideology, according to Eagleton (1991:30), “signifies ideas, beliefs, policies, explanations, and justifications that appear self-evidently true which help to legitimate the interests of the international institutions described by Cox in his analysis of the world order, specifically by distortion and dissimulation”. Critical theory sees ideology as intrinsically dishonest, and as a practice of false beliefs that justifies procedures and structures that keep people unwittingly in servitude, and that actually works to preserve a biased social and political order. Brookfield (2001) stated that ideology does this by convincing people that existing social arrangements are naturally ordained and obviously work for the good of everyone. Critical Theorists such as Eagleton and Gramsci have taken issue with this view, arguing that ideology is not, by definition, false and that a condition of it gaining continued acceptance is that it contain elements that are broadly seen as true (cf. Brookfield, 2001).

Just like Cox, strongly influenced by Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, is the French philosopher Louis Althusser (1971). He deepened the understanding of ideology in his influential essay on *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. For Althusser, ideology was a systematic form of thought control which ensured that, people at all levels of the economic and social system accepted the system’s basic reasonableness. This, from a critical point of view, subjects people to a form of domination and injustice. Ideology intentionally obscures the fact that the system is based on certain values that further some interests over others (Brookfield, 2001:15). Brookfield asked how people can be so steeped in ideology without being aware of that. In answering this question, Brookfield draws from the work of Althusser (1971), who argued that this was made possible because “an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice or practices” (p. 166) and because “the ‘ideas’ of a human subject exist in his actions” (p. 168). These actions are then “inserted into practices governed by rituals of dominant ideology” (p. 182). In other words, ideology lives and breathes in our daily decisions, routine behaviour, and small-scale interactions (Brookfield, 2001:15). The main concern with critical theory here is in understanding and challenging the

operations of ideology, often expressed as ideology critique, an activity springing from the enlightenment conviction that living fully as an adult means acting on the basis of instincts, impulses, and desires that are truly our own, rather than implanted in us (Brookfield, 2001:16).

Another important aspect of ideology is that it is hard to detect. This is because ideology is embedded in language, social habits, and cultural forms that combine to shape the way we think about the world and the kind of development policies that shape our lives (Brookfield, 2001:14). For neo-liberals, as Brookfield argues, ideology appears as common-sense or as something obvious, while critical theory sees it as a system of beliefs that is deliberately skewed to support the interests of a powerful minority. Understanding the process of how ideology works to support the power of a minority is the central idea in the often-quoted sentence from Marx and Engels's work in 1970, *The German Ideology*: "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, that is, the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. . . ." (cf. Brookfield, 2001:14).

5.5.3 Neo-liberalism: A Form of Governance

The final theme that this study will take from critical theory is governance. The study sees critical theory as a way of analysing neo-liberalism as a form of governance. A more comprehensive understanding of governance as suggested by Rose (1996:41), is that it involves, "all those ways of reflecting and acting that have aimed to shape, guide, manage or regulate the conduct of persons ... in the light of certain principles and goals", and to connect these principles and goals with "various procedures and apparatuses that would seek to give them effect". The mode of governance in a neo-liberal agenda has shifted from the process of governing through government of a state or its institutions towards the market. Deregulation, privatisation and decentralisation indicate this clear shift of responsibility from the state to the individual through choice made in the market, and these developments signal a distinctly different orientation in governance (Eddy, 2006). Eddy argued that with neo-liberal governance have come new forms of social control, surveillance, and pressures towards complicity (Eddy, 2006:6). This, according to Eddy, has placed enormous external pressures on domestic governments to conform to an international agenda of 'good governance'. Such forms of social control, surveillance and pressure to comply with international dictate has provided critical theory with a platform from which to understand how power operates in actual governing arrangements, as Griffin (2007) has pointed out. This clearly has an important implication for appreciating the limits to democratic and

successful policy-making today, as theses by Cox and Habermas seek to illustrate. Effective governance should seek to enhance democratic processes, provide direction and offer the means to make practical progress, which, as this study argues, are lacking in a neo-liberal agenda of ‘good governance’.

Governance refers to ‘the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented’ (UN ESCAP, 2005). According to Bakker & Gill (2003:68), evidence is accumulating that neo-liberal governance structures, laws and institutions are characterised by unequal representation and a decreasing availability of public goods required for the maintenance of capabilities and human security. To understand this, the study draws on the work of Cox and Habermas in analysing neo-liberalism as a form of governance. For Cox, such a mode of governance is, from a critical theory perspective, never neutral. Because citizens’ participation in policy processes and implementation is very limited, and Cox argues that decision-making processes tend to support the hegemonic world order. It is also significant that important power relations at work in neo-liberal governance, with some groups in society having relatively more influence (international institutions) than others (government and local citizens), affect human security. Pointing out the power relations, it is argued, is necessary to recognise the dominant social representation in neo-liberal governance, and to assess it critically in relation to potential alternative frameworks. In supporting Cox’s thesis, Habermas’s work supports a critique of such undemocratic ways in which policies are formed.

Rhodes (1997) maintains that the manner in which global trade is managed or governed by WTO represents a process of “governance without government”. Trade agreements conform to laws that prevent any form of democratic engagement by the people of a particular nation with the unaccountable powers of capital (McNally, 2002:195). In most cases this has an effect on the expansion of trade especially in poor countries like Sierra Leone. The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation (WCSDG: 2004:25) stated that “...the majority of developing countries did not experience significant trade expansion. Indeed, most of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), a set that comprises of most countries in sub-Saharan Africa suffered a relative fall in their share of world markets, despite the fact that many of these countries had implemented trade liberalisation measures”. This actually indicates that the unfair treatment of some countries over others undermines their ability to expand trade even after introducing trade liberalisation measures.

Pierre and Peters stated that, there are many approaches and theories associated with the processes of governance (cf. Quinn, 2008). They argue that governance has a strong ideological association with Western forms of liberal democracy and economic rationalism. In this context, it adopts the liberal philosophy of small government and the central role of a free market economy. This means reducing the welfare state, decentralisation of authority, the expansion of the role of the private sector and civil society in the delivery of public services, and economic globalisation, all of which demand new ways of managing state functions (Quinn, 2008).

Craig & Porter (2006) stated that the governance approach shifts power from the state downwards to local organisations, outwards to non-state agencies, and upwards to international organisations. Quinn (2008) claims that a shift in power upwards occurs when states accept binding regulatory and compliance regimes through membership of global governance organisations for the management of public issues. Take, for example, the prevention of the spread of diseases for which the WHO has put forward initiatives to tackle such issues, or the Education for All initiatives directed by the UN. Cox's work influences this study's analysis here, because the fact that states are subjected to binding regulatory and compliance governance initiatives indicates a one-dimensional decision-making process in which certain groups, for example the World Bank and the IMF, have influence over others (the state and other local authorities). Cox argues that this form of arrangement and decision-making weakens the power of the state. The second of the power shift is, the transfer of power downwards is epitomised by national policies of decentralisation of state powers to regional and local bodies, and, in particular, to the communities through their association with state institutions and public service delivery. The third part is outwards to the private sector and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which are increasingly engaged in the delivery of public sector services on behalf of governments. With these different mechanisms of power relations in place, Craig & Porter argue that the role of government is important here in participating in these arrangements and in setting or steering the political and economic environment to facilitate the adoption of the neo-liberal governance approach. For Habermas, governance in this sense should imply a greater political engagement with non-state actors and the public, and the role of government should be in reconciling demands and determining the environment for such political engagement to take place.

5.6 The State in a Neo-liberal Society

This study agrees with Robertson & Dale (2008) that the state is still present as a key institution, but in a very different form from that of a quarter of a century ago. However, they argue that the state no longer functions in the way it did when it directed tax spending and policy-making, but it acts through new forms and techniques of governance that include both a wider agenda for the governance of education and health care (e.g. privatisation, fees) and, especially, new, non-state agencies. According to Harvey (2005), neo-liberalism both attacks and strengthens the state. It criticises in issues where it offers some respite for ordinary people – health, education, welfare – but it strengthens the power of the state in its more explicit authoritarian functions – policing, surveillance, and military. This is understandable, as Cox, following Polanyi, notes, capitalism is essentially anti-social, and capitalist markets subordinate human needs and life to profit. It is an untenable affiliation, and therefore, it follows that the stronger the capitalism market becomes the more it produces poverty and inequality, leading people to protest and revolt.

There is then the need to make the state stronger to defeat popular uprisings. And that is exactly what neo-liberalism does in practice even if, in theory, it talks a different language. The discourse is conflicting and presents an incorrect explanation of what truly happens in reality. Hence it is, as Critical Theorists might argue, ideological in the sense that it is a defence of the interests of those with power and wealth over those of the general population. Harvey (2005) argues that the role of the state in a free market society, as we have seen above, is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. He observes that the existence of the state is to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets (Harvey, 2005).

Harvey (2005) offers the additional argument that in areas where markets do not exist (such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. This means, the state is compelled to introduce neo-liberal policies in these corresponding areas to allow the continued existence of the free market. But beyond these responsibilities the state should not endeavour. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum, according to Harvey, because the theory indicates that, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices), and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias

state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit (Harvey, 2005). Peck and Tickell (2007:33), however, argue that neo-liberalism does not involve a retreat or withering of the state, but rather a fundamental restructuring and reorganisation of the state to serve the goals of marketisation.

From a neo-liberal perspective governments should have a role in protecting vulnerable people, especially children, from being mistreated by others (Friedman, 1981:24). Von Hayek (2000:90), one of the greatest advocates of neo-liberalism, maintains that “there are common needs that can be satisfied only by collective action and which can thus be provided for without restricting individual liberty. Von Hayek refers to health and education as areas where the state can play an important role in society, without harming personal freedom. However, problems arise when a government gathers too many powers and takes on the task of bringing about social justice through acting as a redistributor of goods, services and income (Von Hayek, 2000:92). In this case, the state uses its coercive powers to determine and allocate resources according to what it thinks people need and deserve (Von Hayek, 2000). This kind of welfare state according to Von Hayek is irreconcilable with a free society as it restricts people’s choices.

The state should embrace privatisation, and sell state assets to the private sector, or contract public services out to the private sector (Harvey, 2005:160; Holmsten, 2003:24; Scholte, 2005:38; Slaughter, 2005:43). This could include all state-owned enterprises such as schools, universities, public infrastructure, radio and television, and health care (McGregor, 2001:84). It should further support deregulation and liberalisation, which implies the limitation of its ability to protect domestic interests and capital, in favour of trade and capital flow (Scholte 2005:38; Slaughter, 2005:43,56). According to Cox, neo-liberalism tells us that the state should adapt to a world of competition and deregulation, hence, competitiveness of the national economy within the global is a focus for the governments within a neo-liberal concepts (in Slaughter 2005: 49; Larner, 2000:5). Cerny termed this as “competition state” in which states are traded on markets because of their competitive function within the global economy (in Slaughter, 2005:51). To facilitate the private sector and the free market, governments should reduce taxes (both personal and corporate), and minimise government expenditures and debts. This means less personal income tax, giving consumers more ‘choice’ in how to spend their money, and less corporate tax which will support private incentives (Bell and Head, 1994:38; Scholte, 2005:39). Neo-liberalism emphasises that both individuals and corporations suffer unnecessary burdens under heavy taxation, excessive regulation, and interference by government (Clarke, 2004:31). Therefore

the heavy taxation and regulations of the welfare state are seen as producing a disincentive to economic investment (Offe, 2000:69).

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights further enhanced the ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom (United Nations). The June 2000 Ministerial Conference on "*A Community of Democracies*" and a non-governmental conference on "*World Forum on Democracy*" reaffirmed the developing and developed countries' commitment to common democratic values and standards. It is Charters, Covenants, and other International Treaties that establish the foundation for a state's responsibilities to its citizens (United Nations). The World Development Report (1997:5) described the first job of the state as getting the fundamentals rights. The report stressed that five fundamental tasks lie at the core of every government's mission, without which sustainable, shared, poverty-reducing development is impossible. These were: establishing a foundation for the rule of law; maintaining a non-distortionary policy environment, including macro-economic stability; investing in basic social services and infrastructure; protecting the vulnerable; and protecting the environment.

A similar view was expressed by Potter (2004) that, the state's most important function is the provision of security. This means creating a safe and secure environment and developing legitimate and effective security institutions. In particular, Potter also claimed that the state is required to prevent cross-border invasion and loss of territory, to eliminate domestic threats or attacks on the national order, to prevent crime, and to enable its citizens to resolve their disputes with the state and their fellow citizens. Another major political good that the state should provide, according to Potter (2004), is to address the need to create legitimate, effective and political administrative institutions and participatory processes, and to ensure the active and open participation of civil society in the formulation of the state's government and policies. Other political goods provided by states, Potter argues, include medical and health care, schools and educational instruction, roads, railways, harbours and other physical infrastructure, money and banking system, a beneficial fiscal and institutional context in which citizens can pursue personal entrepreneurial goals, and methods of regulating the sharing of the environmental commons.

Although neo-liberalism limits the function of the state and government and seeks to expand the free market and individual choice, this does not necessary mean, in practice, that the state is less important.

5.7 Contradictions in the Neo-liberal Agenda

This section examines the conflict between the theoretical claims of neo-liberalism and the reality of its effect on the population. It explains how critical theory draws out the contradictions in neo-liberal policies that aim to free the individual but, in reality, serve as an ideological framework for shifting power and decision-making out of the hands of accountable institutions (the state, national governments) and into the hands of powerful private corporations and governing elites. This shows the exploitation and motives facilitated by neo-liberalism and its implementers. This section will focus on economic growth, macro-economic stability and fiscal austerity, good governance and foreign direct investment. Although the empirical evidence supporting neo-liberal reform is mixed, the social implications, as evidence from this study suggests, has a very serious effect on human security, with no viable alternative emanating from the market, in developing economies. It is increasingly clear that the pursuit of structural adjustment stabilisation programs and post-conflict reconstruction has not yielded the desired benefits of improving the lives of the population.

5.7.1 Economic Growth vs Poverty Reduction

According to Gamco (2010), proponents of neo-liberal policies have touted it as the best means of generating economic growth, which in turn promotes human development by reducing poverty. This group are the pro-neoliberals and, as Klak & Hey (1999) have pointed out, they emphasise the positive implications of the reforms for macro-economic variables, particularly growth. Representatives of this group include Williamson (1993) and Krueger (1993). Their argument generally reflects the assumptions of neo-classical economic theory, stressing countries' comparative advantages, as well as the counter-productive role that state-ownership and regulatory policy tend to have on innovation and growth. Krueger (1993:13), for example, argues that central planning will create an economic environment that affects growth and explains the reason why economic decline was not more precipitous.

The IMF reports that Sierra Leone economic growth fell from the 15% achieved in 2012 to 13% in 2013-14 (World Bank, 2013). In contrast to the neo-liberal claim above, it is argued that at the broader development level, although there have been some improvements in certain areas, the country's social indicators are amongst the lowest in the world and further efforts are needed to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to the Sierra Leone Youth Report (2012:10), rural and peri-urban poverty underlies Sierra Leone's perennial low scores against indices of human development (HDI). The HDI for 2012 was

0.359 compared with a sub-Saharan African average of 0.475, which placed it 177th out of 187 listed countries. The report further stated that, when Sierra Leone's HDI is adjusted to reflect inequality, it falls to 0.21, a reduction of 41.6%. The average HDI adjustment to reflect inequality was minus 33.5% for low HDI countries and minus 35% for sub-Saharan Africa. These figures indicate that there are relatively large differences in quality of life among Sierra Leoneans as compared to the populations of other poor countries contradicting the neo-liberal claim that economic growth promotes human development and reduces poverty. It is important to state that Sierra Leone's economic growth is influenced by the mining sector and to a lesser extent by the education and health sector. Therefore, from a critical theory perspective, this analysis of economic growth, promoted by neo-liberalism, is highly inequitable. This is because it has failed to consider education and health as important growth variables. A response from one of the interviewed participants in the focus group reads:

“The neo-liberal reform is more focussed on achieving economic growth at the expense of investing and improving social programmes like education and health, which should also be fundamental to our country's development process to ensure balanced growth” (Freetown, 10/01/2011).

This study supports the argument, put forward by Aheame (2009) that the poorest in society bear the brunt of the social costs of neo-liberal reforms, and, even in the long term, inequality will remain high and its effect on poverty reduction questionable.

5.7.2 Macroeconomic Stability and Fiscal Austerity vs Expansion of Social Services

Neo-liberals see economic growth as the most important indicator linked to poverty reduction. Sustained economic growth, they argue, requires macro-economic stability which cannot be provided by government interference in the economy but only by governments receding in order to allow the market to reach a state of natural equilibrium. The World Bank and the IMF believe that macro-economic stability ensures high rates of sustained economic growth only when other structural measures, such as reduction in government expenditure, as part of the neo-liberal reform, are implemented. This study disagrees with this claim. It is argued that cuts in government expenditure mean public sector lay-offs, wage restraint, the abolition of subsidies (most notably food subsidies), and increasing charges for the use of government services, such as health and education, at the same time as governments attempt to increase revenues through tax increases. Such policies, according to Pastor and Conroy, fall disproportionately on the poor, not only are they more dependent on state services and

subsidies but also the easiest taxes to raise are often sales and value-added taxes which fall more heavily on low income consumers (cited in Paris 2004: 166-167). Large scale cut-backs in public sector employment can also have the effect of creating what Zack-Williams (2000) called 'the new poor', as middle-income professionals such as teachers, health workers and civil servants are made redundant.

In Sierra Leone for instance, the Government, together with its international partners, noted that, the major economic constraint on private investment, domestic or foreign, has been the poor state of the country's infrastructure (Agenda for Change Sierra Leone, 2008-2012). To improve the infrastructure the Government was allowed to increase its expenditure. In theory neo-liberals are promoting a decrease in government expenditure, but, in practice, they encourage spending on such projects to facilitate the expansion of the private sector in serving their own interests. While spending on education and health care is restricted. Fiscal retrenchment and caps on government spending in Sierra Leone have impeded the expansion of social services, such as health care and education into war affected areas (Hanlon, 2005:6). For example, concerning education, the National Recovery Strategy estimated that an additional 8,000 teachers were required in 2003, but because the Ministry of Finance ceiling of 25,000 teachers had already been reached, only 3,000 were hired in 2004 (Hanlon, 2005:6).

5.7.3 Neo-liberal Governance vs Citizens Participation

The mode of governance in a neo-liberal agenda has shifted from the process of governing through government of a state or its institutions towards the market. Neo-liberalism also works as a political system, one in which there is formal and real democracy, as they claim, but the citizens remain spectators, diverted from any meaningful participation in decision-making (Ross & Gibson, ed., 2007). This process has undermined the policy autonomy of democratic states. Stiglitz (2002: xiii) describes this as anti-democratic, hypocritical, lacking transparency and serving the special interests of international agencies. For neo-liberals, as McChesney (1998) said, democracy is permissible as long as the control of business is forbidden to popular deliberation or change. This, as the study suggest, is also responsible for the ongoing systemic problems in Sierra Leone. The citizens are not part of the development process, and have become passive recipient of state initiatives instead of becoming active partners, especially in decision-making, as critical theory suggests.

Burbules & Warnick (2004:10) argue that the reason for questioning specific policies and practices is to find out whether they support or violate the principle of justice, fairness or

equality that is at the heart of critical theory, or whether they may violate certain rights. In Sierra Leone for example, there was general discontent amongst MPs that international institutions only negotiated with the executives and political elites and that everything was brought to parliament as a *fait accompli* (Robinson, 2008). This view of the lack of citizens' participation in decision-making which shapes their lives, was also captured in the participant interview and UN report. For example, this was clearly evident in the comment of a civil society activist, Abu Brima, who called for citizens' voices, especially youths and women to be included in policy development:

"...whose voices have been marginalised in many governments-led national development agenda to be taken more seriously if any lasting sustainable human development can be achieved in Sierra Leone and globally? He added further that many times, conferences and meetings, like the agenda for prosperity (President Ernest Bai Koroma's development plan 2013-2018), where the country's development agenda is discussed, are attended disproportionately by foreign experts, diplomats, government officials, and foreign development advisers, who more often design policies in their own interests, with the voices of communities and ordinary people effectively absent and excluded" (UNDP, 2013).

This relationship between citizens, government and international agencies, according to Torres (2006) is inadequate, often wastes public resources, creates unproductive conflict, and fails to tap citizens' potential for solving public problems. It takes power out of the hands of ordinary people and into the hands of the complex formation of global elites that, although largely rooted in the global north, assert their power by co-opting elites in the global south. This is then sold to politicians and citizens of the south as a form of 'good governance'.

5.7.4 Shift in Investment vs Consequences for Local Citizens

The neo-liberal agenda also requires the reduction of government regulation of business and government ownership of industry, and the lifting of geographical restraints on the free flow of capital and commodities, in order to maximise the ability of capital to restructure a society (Broomhill, 2001). Deregulation and privatisation, Broomhill noted, permit key sections of capital to shift investment out of areas of declining profitability while creating new areas for potentially profitable investment. At the same time, labour market deregulation, the abandonment of corporatist compromise arrangements between capital, labour and the state, and the reduction of state welfare expenditures all reinforce the disciplining of the workforce which is occurring as a result of increased unemployment and labour market competition

(Broomhill, 2001). This is evident in Sierra Leone, where, as a result of these reforms, companies such as London Mining and African Mineral have shifted their operations recently. In 2010 for example, two civil society organisations, Campaign for Just Mining (CJM) and the Association of Journalists on Mining and Extractives (AJME), challenged the Government on the mining agreement with London Mining. They claimed that the agreement has violated the Mines and Mineral Act of 2009 and other legislation. The substantial tax discounts extended to London Mining, especially in relation to income tax and the way in which the payment was computed, which does not correspond with the current Mines and Minerals Act, set a bad standard for succeeding arrangement and renegotiations of other mining contracts, and was likely to undermine the country's national development agenda.

Further, CJM and AJME also argued that the widely debated 0.1% Community Development Fund (CDF) in the arrangement needs the company to manage completely 50% of this fund for its so-called corporate social responsibility (CSR). This does not comply with the mining laws in that CSR should not be linked to the CDF. The confidentiality section added in the contract, aiming at restricting facts to the public, makes way for exploitation and undermines the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) process in the country. Again, the report by the Environmental Protection Agency in Sierra Leone (EPA-SL, 2012) highlights how the operation of London Mining along the Manonkoh Village in Port Loko district had caused flooding which had subsequently affected the swamp farms of the local people and destroying all their produce over the last two years. These issues underscore some of the problems associated with neo-liberal reforms and the effects they have on the lives of the population.

It is the view of Ahearne (2009) that, what we are witnessing today is a growing polarisation between different economic regions, and the exacerbation of spatial inequalities as shifting global markets produce winners and losers in the international competitive arena. These Ahearne argues have resulted in the emergence of severe social problems, increasing inequalities and the breakdown of the processes of social cohesion and reproduction in many local areas. These problems are felt most acutely, according to Ahearne, at the local level and pose increasing challenges for the local state. Rather than providing the basis for a new social and cultural consensus, therefore, neo-liberalism has increasingly fragmented and divided communities.

Additionally, the poor are often the least capable of taking advantage of liberalisation. Poor farmers, for example, often depend on state subventions for seed and fertiliser, and may

strive to take advantage of market liberalisation without this support. Privatisation is rarely impartial and in, a post-conflict setting, it can serve to reinforce traditional divisions (Junne & Verkoren, 2005:199). This is because only traditionally wealthy groups, or those who have profited from war, are likely to have the resources to take over privatised industry, and the privatisation process is unlikely to be transparent and unbiased (Kamphuis, 2005:198).

5.7.5 External Debt Servicing vs Advancing Human Security

It is difficult to understand how external debt servicing with stringent conditions attached, especially to poor countries like Sierra Leone, could advance the cause of improving human security. The United Nations' Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has identified the cost of debt-servicing among many African countries, which has been in conflict with the fulfilment of the MDGs (UNCTAD, 2004). Thus, between 1970 and 2002, Africa received US \$540 billion in loans, but, despite paying back around US \$550 billion, there remained an outstanding debt stock of US \$295 billion (UNCTAD, 2004). The United Nations Millennium Project (UNMP) noted that during the past decade average per capita incomes in the developing countries has risen by more than 21%, but in 2001 there were 130 million more people living in extreme poverty than there were a decade earlier (UNMP, 2005). This meant that 21% of the population in these countries were still trying to survive on an income of less than \$1 per day.

Furthermore, heavily indebted poor countries had seen their incomes rise only from \$298 per capita to \$337 between 1990 and 2002 (UNMP, 2005: 13–14). Paradoxically, as the World Economic Forum (WEF) has suggested, developments such as the MDGs are 'not mere pious aspirations. They are the fundamental building-blocks of global stability in what has become a tightly interconnected world'. The WEF asserted that 'too often the governments are scarcely trying' to deliver such stability, while 'the non-state actors on the international scene, for instance, businesses and civil society groups, are neither able nor willing to compensate for the inadequacies of government efforts' (WEF, 2004:viii). The superior role conferred by neo-liberalism to non-state actors cannot, in itself, make up for the developmental collapses of state power and global governance.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown the evolution and transformation of liberalism into neo-liberalism from the point of view of critical theory. It was shown that neo-liberalism is a discourse through which power is not only exercised but also in which various forms of subordination and exploitation are manifested, and how this affects the attainment of human security in Sierra Leone. As a form of social science-neutral policy, it should not be questioned but should be accepted as the best form of development practice. The superimposition of this ideology constructs a whole lived reality that encourages the people to take the existing socio-economic structures for granted, an approach that is the antithesis of critical theory. International institutions have been instrumental in legitimising this specific form of knowledge and language.

The chapter also shows that neo-liberalism is anti-democratic. It places power in the hands of elites and technocrats who make decisions on behalf of the public, who are too ill-informed or uneducated to have an opinion. The relationship between neoliberalism and governance was also examined. Governance was shown to have a strong ideological association with Western forms of liberal democracy and economic rationalism. As a form of global governance, neo-liberalism takes power out of the hands of ordinary people and into the hands of the complex formation of global elites and, although largely rooted in the global north, it asserts its power by co-opting elites in the global south. This has also come with new forms of social control such as surveillance, debt dependency and pressures towards complicity. Echoing Cox and Eddy, the way in which power operates in actual governing arrangements, has shifted the process of governing from the state or its institutions towards the market. Deregulation, privatisation and decentralisation indicate a clear shift in this responsibility.

Critical theory, as Cox informs us, emphasises the importance of standing aside from this prevailing order, questioning the nature and origins of institutions and social relations, and how they might be changed. This is because the internal structures of states are believed to be adjusted so that each can best transform the global consensus into national policy and practice. Echoing Bakker & Gill, it was shown that compliance with such policies has been achieved under the influence of international debt repayment schemes, SAPs, and most recently, PRSPs. This new constitutionalism, as the chapter shows, turns binding control over designated national policy fields to external constitution-like agreements that facilitate the mobility of global capitalism. From a critical theory perspective, pointing out the power relations, it is argued that it is necessary to recognise the dominant social representation in

neo-liberal governance, and to assess it critically in relation to potential alternative frameworks.

Finally, the chapter has shown the conflict between the theoretical claims of neo-liberalism and the reality of its effects on the population. Using critical theory, it exposes the contradictions in neo-liberal policies, which neo-liberals claim will free the individual, but, in reality, serve to act as an ideological framework in shifting power and decision-making out of the hands of accountable institutions (the state, national governments) and into the hands of powerful private corporations and governing elites. Although the empirical evidence supporting the neo-liberal reform is mixed, the social implications, as evidence from this study suggests, has a very serious effect on human security. In the next chapter, the study examines human security, an alternative approach to neo-liberalism.

Chapter 6

Human Security and Development: An Alternative to Neo-liberalism

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents human security as a people-centred and alternative form of development approach to neo-liberalism as it addresses the widespread concerns of human susceptibility. Human security integration into policy practices will be useful not only as an evaluative framework but also in assessing the affairs of the state and critiquing the way in which public policies are designed. Its specific focus is on the interests of humanity as a whole by empowering them. Empowerment according to McCormack (2008) is understood as giving political power and control to the citizens and establishing clear lines of accountability and responsibility. Following Newman (2001:247) and Grayson (2004) the human security framework offers a critical perspective on the very sources of local and global inequality, education insecurity, poverty and underdevelopment. Therefore, as Periago (2012) observes, it focuses on the risks, dangers, and threats to human development, evaluates the degree of confidence that people have in public services and goods, and emphasises what can be lost when human potential is thwarted.

It is argued that the extent to which neo-liberalism has become the only workable global development policy for poor countries has been much more confined than appears to be the case. This study has shown in Chapter 5 the contradiction in the neo-liberal agenda from a critical theory point of view. Two important issues need highlighting here, drawn from Apple et al. (2008:9) that will provide the basis for this chapter. First, states are no longer able to function independently in determining policies that are best suited for their countries. This is an issue that was raised in the work of Horkheimer, Habermas and Cox and is central to critical theory. Control has now been taken over by international institutions which are increasingly dominant because of their capital and power resources. By so doing, they have undermined the authority of the state by transforming the basis of their wealth production and by disrupting the labour markets. Second, the forms through which neo-liberalism installed itself are anti-democratic. Rather than seeking merely to minimise the role of the state, as in classical liberalism, neo-liberalism worked through the state, in what Stephen Gill (2003) called “the constitutionalisation of the neo-liberal agenda”. This was summed up by Apple et al. (2008) as a shift from the state governance to governance through the market. It is important to recognise that this is not a correct or fixed process, but to a degree, reliant on existing power structures and arrangements that continue, not only to shape development agendas in poor countries, but also reconstruct the provision of education and health care as

part of the wider services sector. The idea of human security is mainly concerned about progress, equality and social justice (Wilkin, 2001) and therefore congruent with critical theory. This means constructing the kind of institutions, procedures, and structures that enable all people to meaningfully take part in the decisions that shape their lives (ibid).

This chapter aims to achieve two objectives:

- 1) To show the extent to which human security is congruent with critical theory. This is important because they are both concerned with human emancipation, they have universal assumptions about what people need, and they believe that the key to emancipation is for people to have the opportunity to take control of their lives.
- 2) To draw out the possible contradictions in human security. As this chapter will show, although its goals seem incompatible with those of neo-liberalism, (one of the key research questions), that at the same time it also has connections with it, in that, in practice it relies on the state and the market to achieve its goals, however critical this might be of them in theory.

Thus, the chapter is organised as follows. It provides a definition of human security, why it has been chosen as an alternative approach, and then proceeds to show how and why it has emerged as a discourse in academia and in the field of social policy. It then went on to examine how human security looks from the point of view of critical theory, and its uneasy relationship with neo-liberalism. The chapter concludes with a summary of the chapter.

6.2 Understanding the Concept of Human Security

According to Heinbecker (1999:1), the concept of human security is both a continuation of established themes as well as being a new development in global politics. It concerns with human needs means, Wilkin (2001:17) argued that, it is part of a well-organised debate in the history of political thought and practice that has centred upon needs satisfaction. This view, he notes limit the basic definition of human security to two-fold, which this study agrees with: first, such a view flattens out the concept of needs and encourages us to think in minimal terms rather than the maximisation of need satisfaction; second, such a view fails to address questions of autonomy and the meaningful participation by citizens in the institutions and procedures that shape their daily political, economic and cultural lives. He argues that decisions concerning political economy, which are often taken at levels beyond the public control of democratically accountable institutions, only exacerbate this situation. These were employed as means of power and knowledge-following Horkheimer, Habermas and Cox-to exercise control over a population. Wilkin (2001) argues that, the meaning of

human security is a strand of contemporary debate about issues of equality and global social justice that liberate people from oppressive and exploitative power structures as seen in the imposition of the neo-liberal agenda. A concern that is at the centre of the critical theory debate, that is, the emancipation of people from oppressive power structures.

Wilkin (2001) argues that, this is in part connected to the work of the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), which examines a range of indicators on an annual basis as a means to evaluate the state of global human development, published as the Human Development Report (HDR). In particular, it lists seven main categories of human security: economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and environmental. The report recognises human security as a universal concern and outlined the many threats that are common to all people, rich and poor alike, but in which their interacting may differ from one part of the world to another. Beyond that, Baylis & Smith (1997) argue that, the idea connects with recent debates in international relations that have sought to challenge the traditional accounts of security which have tended to prioritise the centrality and primacy of the nation-state as the necessary foundation for political organisation. With this account in mind, the next section provides a definition for human security.

6.2.1 What is Human Security?

The definition of human security remains a very contentious issue. The concept is a contested one socially and politically, and part of this work is to engage in that debate. Different people have different ideas as to its meaning, and its lack of specific boundary and conceptual clarity as an intellectual discourse. Others have made considerable effort to evolve its influence upon global agendas. Paris (2001) said that “Human security is like ‘sustainable development’-everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it means.” This ambiguity, it is argued, arises from the fact that anything which concerns the security of individuals and their shared existence may come under the heading of human security. However, Nugraha & Madu (2013:74) argue that, the debate is generally between two viewpoints. The first is the traditional one namely state-based with national interest (realism/neo-realism perspective). The second is the reverse, it is non-traditional with a normative-value based that has the individual’s interest at heart (human security, liberal, critical perspective). According to Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy (2007), proponents who favour the latter argue that, this represents a paradigm shift because it focus on the individual and policy-making in global security, from traditional state-centric security to human security.

In their analysis, Nugraha & Madu (2013:74) stated that, unlike the traditional security approach that focused on states, the idea of human security emphasises that individuals' security should be the primary objective. They also claimed that it focuses on non-military threats to security which affect individuals' lives that may lead to addressing both local and global security problems. The widening and developing feature of human security, it is argued, shares the same claim with critical theory because of its concern with human needs. The fundamental work of critical theory is its effort to try to understand the central aspect of contemporary society by revealing its historical and social development and contradictions. It is this problem of ambiguity and other concerns that led the UNDP (1994), for the first time, to define the concept of human security, focusing on "freedom from fear" which could be interpreted as freedom from war, conflict and violence; and "freedom from want" which embraced a wide range of livelihood issues. In doing so, Wilkin argued that, it has sought to outline a comprehensive overview of key indicators of human development on a global scale and has brought into the public arena the issues that underpin this idea. It does emphasise two particular themes, put forward by Wilkin (2001:5) that are central to an approach based upon some consensus as to the meaning of equality and social justice that is at the heart of human security. First, the satisfaction of human needs should be central to the way in which we seek to organise our political, economic and cultural institutions. Second, the attainment of human autonomy and the possibility of meaningful participation in the institutions and procedures that shapes political, economic and cultural life. Further, he argued that for autonomy to be attained, it is crucial that people have the resources needed in order to make rational choices about their lives that they are subsequently able to act upon. Thus autonomy as Wilkin notes, is about the agency, participation and control that people can exercise over the institutions, resources and practices that shape their lives, a theme that also emerged from critical theory.

Other commentators have argued that the "freedom from want" part of the UNDP's definition is adequately dealt with by existing human rights and human development strategies, making a broad concept of human security unnecessary (Quinn, 2008). This study disagrees with this view because these strategies are still failing to protect and empower people to participate in decision-making, thus justifying the use of the human security idea. In supporting this view, Menon (2007) argues that, human rights have become a major advocacy and diplomatic tool used by states and civil society organisations to pressure other states to protect their citizens. While human development, as Menon observes, consists of a range of processes promoted by international development agencies and donors to improve

the capacity and welfare of individuals, in a way that they believe could contribute to national development and security. To date, Menon argued, these methods have not achieved their desired results despite massive aid and development efforts worldwide. They have failed to provide human security and a new approach is required to help us understand the causes of persistent human insecurity and what can be done about them.

Although very contentious, its focus on human needs has made it an evolving field among nation states and international institutions, incorporating issues relating to human development, human rights, and environmental sustainability. To understand the concept from different viewpoints, this study has examined the following definitions:

Owen (2004) defined human security as the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats. In its broad sense, this definition consists of a long list of possible threats, from traditional security threats such as war to more development-oriented threats such as health, poverty and the environment.

Caroline Thomas (2001) gives a new dimension to its definition in the context of globalisation and the inequalities associated with its dynamics (cf. Menon, 2007:14; also see Alkire, 2003:15). Like King and Murray, she equates human security with basic material needs, human dignity, and democracy. She described human security as a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met, and in which human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community, can be met. Thus, while material sufficiency lies at the core of human security, for Caroline, the concept also encompasses non-material dimensions to form a qualitative whole. Her definition is oriented towards an active and substantive notion of democracy, which is directly engaged with discussions of democracy at all levels, from the local to the global. Great importance was also attached to the eradication of poverty and providing material support as the key elements in human security.

Amartya Sen (2000) also presented a broad concept of human security by linking economic and development aspects to political and social aspects (cf. Menon, 2007:15). His analysis of it placed high priority on the social cost of unequal income distribution and highlighted the need for increasing security along with the old slogan of 'growth with equity', given the fact that occasional downturns are common in market economies. He argued that, in trying to guarantee secure daily living in general, we need not only social and economic provisions (for example, "economic safety nets" and the guaranteeing of basic education and health care), but also political participation, especially by the weak and the vulnerable, since their

voice is vitally important. This, he said, required not only the establishment and efficient working of democracies with regular elections and the tolerance of opposition, but also the cultivation of a culture of open public discussion about issues. He argues that democratic participation can directly improve security by supporting human dignity, but it also helps to secure the continuation of daily lives and even survival.

Leaning and Are proposed a new dimension of security after studying the low level of human security in Africa. Even though their definition and theory of human security focused on human development and capability, unlike other scholars, they did not ignore the psychological and non-material aspects of human security (cf. Menon, 2007; also see Alkire, 2003). Instead they described human security as a pre-condition for human development. According to them, human security is “an underlying condition for sustainable human development”. They argue that it results from the social, psychological, economic, and political aspects of human life that in times of acute crisis or chronic deprivation protect the survival of individuals, support individual and group capacities to attain minimally adequate standards of living, and promote constructive group attachment and continuity through time. In its final report on *Human Security Now*, the Commission on Human Security (CHS, 2003) defines human security as “...to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment”. This means the following: protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life; protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations; using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations; creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity. The commission’s report argues that the concept of human security compliments state security, strengthens human development, and enhances human rights.

A much more open approach was recently presented by the Commission for Africa (2005) in a report which indicated that people-centred “human security becomes an all-encompassing condition in which individual citizens live in freedom, peace, safety, and participate fully in the process of governance”. The report indicated that people should enjoy the protection of fundamental rights, have access to resources and the basic necessities of life, including health and education, and inhabit an environment that is not harmful to their health and wellbeing (cf. Quinn, 2008).

The above definitions, one way or another, have provided different views to the one presented by UNDP. The definitions provided by the Commission for Africa and Amartya Sen are relevant to this study. They both specify human security as an approach which ought

to address issues emanating from structures of governance, which is at the heart of critical theory. Governance of course, introduces the question of state responsibilities, but at the same time opens up the possibility of a more localised determination of human security issues which may be anything (Quinn, 2008).

Human security is an international as well as a state responsibility, and moves away from the traditional state-centric to a people-centred concept that is locally driven, comprehensive, and sustainable (OCHA-HSU, 2009). Its specific focus is the individuals, their protection and empowerment. Protection, participation and empowerment of people are therefore the three building blocks in achieving the goal of human security. They are proposed by the CHS as the tri-parts of any human security policy framework, and should involve a broader range of participants: e.g. local communities, international organisations, civil society, as well as the state itself. The CHS (2003) argues that this is important for several reasons:

- As a people-centred concept, human security places the individual at the ‘centre of analysis’. Consequently, it considers a broad range of conditions which threaten survival, livelihood, and dignity, and identifies the threshold below which human life is intolerably threatened.
- Protection is the “strategies, set up by states and international agencies to shield people from menaces”. This refers to the norms, processes, and institutions required in protecting people from critical and pervasive threats. It implies a "top-down" approach, such as establishing the rule of law, accountable and transparent institutions, and democratic governance structures. States have the primary responsibility to implement such a protective infrastructure, and recognise that people face threats that are beyond their control (e.g., natural disasters, financial crises, and conflicts). When people are protected they can exercise choices.
- Empowerment is defined as “strategies that enable people to develop their resilience to difficult situations”. It implies a “bottom-up” approach and aims at developing the capabilities of individuals and communities to make informed choices and to act on their own behalf. Empowering people not only enables them to develop their full potential but also allow them to find ways to participate in solutions that ensure human security for themselves and others. People empowered can make better choices, and actively prevent and mitigate the impact of insecurities.
- The protection-empowerment framework should be embodied in the functioning of any well governed state.

Human security also has an equality dimension. It focuses in understanding both security and insecurity. According to O'Brien & Leichenko (2007), human insecurities are closely related to the deep social and economic inequalities that exist among individuals and communities. It is often the case that one person's security is another's insecurity. They claimed that exclusion, racism, sexism, religious intolerance, and prejudices of many types have often been justified in the name of human security. Equality is considered an important prerequisite for both social development and human security (O'Brien and Leichenko, 2006; UN, 2005; Dodds & Pipper, 2005; Held & Kaya, 2007). It is associated with freedom from bias or favouritism, and entails outcomes that are perceived as fair to all concerned (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2007). It is often related to questions of justice and the notion that there should be equal treatment for equal cases (Rawls, 1971).

As a key component of the movements for social justice, human security includes both fairness and equity in the distribution of economic, political, environmental, and other types of outcomes (see Rawls, 1971; Boulding, 1978; Smith, 1994; Ikeme, 2003). Fairness also has a temporal dimension, such that outcomes of future generations can be treated with the same consideration as outcomes in the present (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2006). Recent economic research shows that, "ceteris paribus, the more egalitarian a society is, the better its growth record and growth potential" (Sanchez 2003, p. 1988). Relative income equality is also associated with greater social cohesiveness and a higher quality of democratic governance (Sanchez, 2003; Held & Kaya, 2007). Human security, as a wide-ranging concept, demonstrates the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of human beings, as well as their potential (Aravena, 2002).

You might also want to ask the question: why not leave the issues of education and health care that this study focuses upon separately from security issues, because security is about the state and its ability to impose and maintain order? The response to this is that education and health has got something to do with security of the state because they are social issues. A practical example is the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone (at the time of writing, November 2014), and the study argues that the security of the country is presently been threaten by the Ebola crisis, which has claimed the lives of so many people and infected many more. This is a security problem because the lives of Sierra Leoneans is in danger. The crisis actually exposed the weakness in the health system where access to health services is a luxury, and where there is lack of health infrastructure and high illiteracy among the population. The lack of basic things like gloves, apron, soap, alcohol gel and water in public hospitals and clinics, which are necessary to prevent the spread of the virus exacerbate the problem. Hence,

some of the medical staff who were treating infected patients also became carriers of the virus adding to its spread.

It makes more sense to consider education and health care as security issues because the state is threatened by so many things and not just from external evasion or rioting. There are people who are starving, people who don't have access to clean drinking water, and those dying from the Ebola virus. Therefore it is important for the state to recognise that the meaning of security is complex. For example, you cannot defeat the Ebola virus with a gun. These are social issues and the notion that being secure is not only a military question but a social one as well. Hence, the example of the Ebola outbreak emphasises the way in which human security draws out the complex nature of security in this modern age. It is about the ability to be safe.

6.2.2 Why Human Security as an Alternative Approach?

There are three reasons why human security has been considered an appropriate development strategy to neo-liberalism. First, this study addresses a wide range of issues that have to do with development, sociology of development, the political economy and international relations. Within this nexus of topics, human security has emerged as a concept which connects development with security. This has broadened the way in which we think about human security as it is now linked to problems such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of access to quality education and health care services. It is a concept that cut across disciplines and enable you to connect different points of view. Second, it has ethical and moral undertakings as it embraces values such as openness, dialogue, justice and equality, which deepens democratic values. Third, human security also has a human significance.

6.3 The Origin and Development of Human Security

This section provides an historical account to understand how and why the idea of human security emerged as a practical and useful policy framework and as an alternative to neo-liberalism.

6.3.1 Post-World War Period

According to Menon (2007), after the WWI, the two dominant strands of foreign policy, namely economic development and military security, have failed to address the main issues which threaten the existence of human beings. Menon described these problems as the growing poverty, displacement, migration, armed conflicts, and environmental degradation.

Instead, he argues that, this period saw the balance of power, the formation of alliances and an arms race focusing blindly on the conventional dimension of military security. This unilateral approach to security, Menon said, ultimately led to the WWII and the human catastrophe that took place in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Menon (2007) further stated that, the post-World War period also witnessed significant changes and transformation of international socio-political configuration. Colonialism ended resulting in emergence of newly formed independent nation states in Asia and Africa. Refugees who have been displaced were rehabilitated and efforts were made to reconstruct war affected countries. This situation, according to Menon, highlighted the limitations of a conventional military centric approach to human problems, and emphasised the need to redefine strategies and policies. It was during this period that the world was evolving out of the shadows of a highly devastating war, and the need for human development was critical that the United Nations (UN) was formed. According to Menon (2007), it was founded on the ideals of peace and justice, with an international system of law and procedure that would replace military aggression and war with negotiation and collective security. Its principle for security according to Jolly & Basu (2006), was initially focused on ways in which the structures and practices of the modern state might address threats to its sovereignty.

Decades later, intra-state conflict and violence increased, in Africa including in Sierra Leone, where many people were victims of their own states rather than being protected by them (Menon, 2007). Much of this violence against citizens, Menon argues, occurred in a context of poverty and ethnic division, and in the absence of basic political and human rights. He noted that understanding these as security and humanitarian concerns, the international community began to participate in conflict resolution initiatives, peace building, and post-conflict development activities in many countries. Therefore, Menon argued that, the post-Cold War security architecture has thus seen a close and deepening association of individual and state security, and an intertwining of international and state responsibilities for human security.

More important, the mass suffering and death in the world today is not caused by inter-state war but rather by disease, poverty, and the lack of access to basic education and health care. Caroline Thomas (2001) argued that, natural catastrophes such as drought, flood, and even earth quake also undermine human security, but even within a single locality they do not undermine everyone's security equally. However, she argued that human insecurity is not some inevitable occurrence. Rather, human insecurity results directly from existing structures of power which determines who enjoys the entitlement to security and who does

not. Such structures, she claimed, can be identified at several levels, ranging from the global, regional, state, to the local level. This situation has helped to expose the weaknesses of the state-centric and unilateral approach to security.

Ogata (2001) described this weakness as a focus on the protection of the state, its boundaries, people, institutions, and values from external attacks. Traditionally, Ogata argues, ensuring human security involves states to setting up powerful military systems to defend themselves, and people were considered to be assured of their security through the protection extended by the state. This approach has privileged the state in carrying forward the principles of state sovereignty as first articulated in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (Menon, 2007). In this classical formulation, Menon claimed that security is about how states use force to manage threats to their territorial integrity, their autonomy and their domestic political order primarily from other states. However, as noted by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS, 2001), “the traditional, narrow perception of security leaves out the most elementary and legitimate concerns of the ordinary people regarding security in their daily lives”. Therefore, while traditionally, security threats were assumed to emanate from external sources, this approach to providing security has been criticised on various grounds, the chief ones being that it did not take adequate steps to address the post-colonial social and economic issues which continues to affect the lives of the population.

6.3.2 Shift in Security Thinking

As the primary threats to world peace have changed, so too must the security mechanisms (Owen, 2004). The end of the Cold War generated this change in security thinking. According to OCHA-HSU (2009), this situation has led to a re-orientation of security view away from the traditional, state-centric conceptions of security that was based primarily on keeping states safe from military violence, offering support and legitimacy to instruments of states, and upholding the principle of state sovereignty. Instead it has focused on a people-centred approach, one that concentrates on the security of people. This means the protection, participation, inclusion, and empowerment of individuals in development processes that affect their security (OCHA-HSU, 2009).

According to the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA, 2005), a range of subjects are important to further understand human security: the political and social exclusion and inclusion of the majority of people; involuntary and voluntary movements of people; protection and empowerment of women; recovery from conflict and the role of

reconciliation; aspects of governance and participation; food security; health security; and education, skills and values. These ideas together with other different issues allow one to look at power, politics, and the contextual factors that create insecurities (Gasper, 2005). This study agrees with Bechir Chourou, who argues that, the reform needed to achieve human security has to grow out of the conviction that, human security is an ethical and moral undertaking, and should embrace values such as solidarity, tolerance, openness, dialogue, transparency, accountability, justice and equity (cf. UNESCO, 2008).

In 1994, the UNDP in its annual Human Development Report drew attention to the widespread conflict and violence, and identified poverty and underdevelopment as the root causes of human insecurity (UNDP Report, 1994). It was this report, for the first time, which explicitly articulated the importance of human security as a tool to guide policy-making and implementation. It further influenced the UN's 1995 World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen. Questioning the traditional state-centric concept of security, it argued that there was a need for a new approach based on a comprehensive concept of human security that embraces economic and social rights (freedom from poverty, hunger, disease, violence and environmental degradation) and political and cultural rights (freedom to exercise basic human rights, freedoms, and cultural identity) (UNDP Report, 1994).

One of the foremost thinkers in the area of human security was the eminent economist, Mahbub Haq, who drew attention to this concept in UNDP's Human Development Report (1994). Since then the concept has been evolving and under-going significant transformation. Although it has continued to be seen as complex and contested, it has undeniably evolved to become a key term in discourse in international relations, development, security studies, economics and the social sciences because of its reach beyond the traditional concept of state security to affirm the importance of individual security (UNESCO, 2008). Human security, as argued from the UNs point of view, corresponds to the right of the individual to "freedom from want and freedom from fear". Martin & Owen (2010) described the UN as an incubator for the concept of human security, promoting the idea both at the macro-institutional level and within its constituent branches, and incorporating it into many aspects of its evolving post-Cold War mandate. As Chomsky pointed out, after 1994 the concept of human security became a central theme of a number of governments through their foreign and defence policies (cf. Menon, 2007). In particular, the initiatives taken by the Japanese, Canadian and Norwegian Governments have led the way in institutionalising the idea of human security. In their respective foreign policies, Menon argues that, they pursued their particular interests and influenced the international

scope and recognition of the concept. According to Alberth & Carsson (2009), in 1999 Canada and Norway created the Human Security Network of foreign ministers, agreeing to meet annually to discuss priorities for common security. Their vision aligns with the narrow definition of human security, emphasising threats of violence, repression and human rights abuses. Japan advances a broad concept, and has championed the use of development collaboration as a mechanism to advance it through country level activities. A brief account of the approaches developed by these countries is provided below:

6.3.3 Japanese Approach to Human Security

The Japanese Government developed its human security approach using the ‘freedom from want’ definition provided by UNDP. Interest was immediate, and in 1995 Prime Minister, Murayama Tomiichi advocated human security in an address to the United Nations General Assembly (Edstrom, 2003). His ideas were endorsed by both of his successors, Hashimoto Ryutaro and Obuchi Keizo. Obuchi, in particular, was dedicated to the concept of human security primarily in the framework of economic development. The Asian economic crisis of 1997 led Japan to integrate it into its foreign policy. Japan then sponsored the Commission on Human Security in 2000 and the publication of its report thereafter (Ogata & Sen, 2000). Japan, heavily influenced by the effects of the Asian crisis at the end of the 1990s, paid particular attention to the economic aspects of human security, threats to survival and the need to protect people from sudden economic downturns (McGrew & Poko 2007:110). It was clear that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) approach to addressing human concerns was closely linked to safety nets and welfare for those affected by the economic downturn (Chossudovsky, 2007). Japan took a view that development reduces the risk of violence and adds directly to human security. This view appeared to be widely acceptable in the Asian region where human rights had long been an issue of contention because of a perceived prioritisation of individual over group rights (Edstrom, 2003).

6.3.4 Canadian Approach to Human Security

Canada’s middle power approach has also played a vital role in defining the concept of human security as it sought to focus on the “freedom from fear” side of the UNDP’s definition, particularly, conflict resolution and intervention (Quinn, 2008). It accentuated protection from violence in its speech to the UN General Assembly in 1996 and during its presidency of the Security Council in 2000. In 1999, Canada arranged a middle power discussion with Norway and echoed a people-centric approach to security in addressing

human concerns. Bajpai indicated that, although the Canadian strategy recognises the full scope of the UNDP's Report, it was particularly concerned with a breakdown of government and society into violence than the need to protect individuals per se (cf. Menon, 2007). This is reflected in Canada's foreign policy statement, as well as its support for the Liu Institute and in the publication of the Human Security Report, which also adopts a narrow approach to human security based on freedom from fear (Canadian dept. of foreign affairs and international trade, 2000). Some of its policies, which had a long history of military commitment to UN peacekeeping, include emphasis on landmines, child soldiers and small arms availability in conflict areas (Caballero-Anthony, 2002).

Canada's approach has been on developing its long-standing interests, and has paid most attention to the protection of individuals from acts of violence. This is evident in its support for humanitarian intervention, the landmines treaty, and the creation of the international criminal court (McGrew & Poko, 2007:110). McGrew & Poko argue that Canada has adopted the concept and established a network of like-minded states which subscribe to the idea, and has identified areas for collective action with the aim of acting as a catalyst by bringing international attention to new and emerging issues. Its version of human security is reflected in the Human Security Report, published in 2005, and this has some similarity with the notion of 'responsibility to protect'. Even though Canada emphasises the security of the individual as opposed to the state, its primary concern is on security in the face of political violence.

6.3.5 Norwegian Approach to Human Security

Norway's approach has also been positive and it is an active partner of the human security network. Since 1990, Norway has been instrumental in the prevention of threats, and encouraging peace and reconciliation (Menon, 2007). It has supported peace efforts in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Indonesia. In Africa, Menon argues that, it has been involved in poverty eradication and ethnic cohesion in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. Moreover, it has played well-known roles in the Middle East peace process through the Oslo Channel, and still played a role in the region as Chair of AHLC, the donor group for Palestinians which bring together major donors (speech by Jan Petersen, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2009). Norway's participation in peace processes takes many forms. It ranges from official facilitation of negotiations as in Sri Lanka and the Philippines, through sponsoring a back-channel for secret negotiations in the Middle East and to being part of an international

coalition, as in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Colombia, to humanitarian assistance in Sudan (see Menon, 2007).

In summary, Japan, Canada and Norway have all raised human security not only as a framework that addresses the concerns of people, but also in conflict affected zones, bringing peace, and human development. It is evident that both foreign and domestic policies are well integrated and reinforced each other to secure domestic as well as international human security.

6.4 The Relationship Between Human Security and Critical Theory

This section examines the relationship between human security and critical theory. It argues that the two are congruent in a number of important ways. They are both concerned with human emancipation, are people-centred and integrates non-military mechanisms as means to security. They challenge prevailing structures of power, injustice in political organisations and economic distribution of resources. To understand individual security needs, both examine structural factors and the power relations that exist, and they put forward policy initiatives that centres on emancipatory projects in order to transform the structural condition and power injustice (Newman, 2010:92-4). They not only demand analysis of day to day realities but also encourage transformation of those realities by empowering people (Nugraha & Madu, 2013). They both, normatively, call for, a re-orientation of structures that produce insecurity (Newman 2010, 87-8), and they bring awareness of the interest, ideology and orientation of other theories.

According to Mukherjee et al. (2010), their focus on assessing insecurity has led to the construction of base-line measures for human needs as pre-requisite, and an integral part of policy research for monitoring socio-economic development processes at meso and micro level. These writers argue that regular periodic monitoring can help to expose human security problems and may help to diffuse them in time. They also claim that using disaggregated human security index as a policy tool, can help to reveal gaps in security and development issues of a local population, and, accordingly, help to prioritise investments.

Human security and critical theory also reject the objectivity of external reality (knowledge) imposed by international agencies (Jackson & Sorensen, 2007:292), and the marginalisation and exclusion of people from such processes. Violent conflicts and discontent may have their origins in human insecurity linked to exclusion and lack of access to resources and power (IIDEA, 2006). Jackson & Sorensen stated that because knowledge is always set in social and political life, this scrutinises the purpose and function performed by such institutions.

As Robert Cox stated, “Theory is always for someone and for some purpose,” and neo-liberalism is another theory that is for someone and actually for the external actors. Hence, critical theory seeks to investigate the politic of production and reproduction of knowledge, because it is concern with power/knowledge and ideology. Therefore, both human security and critical theory are concerned with the unethical behaviour towards the acquisition and exercise of authority, towards duty and obligation, fairness and equality, work and effort, responsibility and freedom (Chourou, 2005).

Human security and critical theory also have a universal assumption about what people need, and it is believed that the key to emancipation is for people to have the opportunity to take control of their lives. Universal emancipation is regarded as the answer to the security problem. The state has a vital role to play in this. It has the authority and the responsibility to ensure that the human security needs of their citizens are met. Thomas (2000:123) argues that national governments are mandated to represent their citizens, they are accountable to their citizens, and they are responsible for the human security of their citizens. Therefore government should be bold to advance the needs of citizens to international agencies in order to protect and empower them. As Thomas said, states must be able to exercise judgement with the goal of human security in mind, they must be able to make the case for development and social imperatives in all international fora, confident that they will be heard and that their voices will count. Policies and practices which undermine the fulfilment of human security will further worsen poverty and inequality in post-conflict countries.

Emancipation means ‘freeing people, as individuals and groups, from those constraints that stop them from carrying out what they freely would choose to do’ (Devetak, 2005:145). According to Cox, the biggest task of emancipating people today is to challenge the domination of neoliberal agendas and ensure that the transformation of structures of political economy is in the interest of the marginalised (Cox, 1981), which both critical theory and human security do. They both proposes alternative objectives of security that emphasise the potential transformation of human relations.

The concept of human security presents a useful entry point to the central security issues affecting the lives of ordinary people, and exposes the inability of government to provide basic services (UNESCO Report, 2008). The 2008 UNESCO report indicated that, this idea represents a paradigm shift from the traditional resort of the state as the provider of security to focusing on the people who are the victims of today’s security threats, thereby helping to identify their protective needs. This is an approach that is at the heart of critical theory. The examination of people with their diverging interests and relations with each other, uncovers

the social, economic, and political factors that promote or endanger their security (UNESCO Report, 2008).

Crucially, human security and critical theory bring moral and ethical values to the security debate, give voice to the poor and deepen democratic principles and practices. By doing so, human security and critical theory encourage ordinary citizens to act to take more control of their lives by organising and mobilising themselves to push governments and corporations for policies that reflect their interests rather than those of elites. This coalesces both national and foreign policy in protecting the lives of individuals and empowering the lives of communities and groups. Poko et al. (2007) maintained that human security and critical theory are policy relevant because of their engagement with policy analysts and governments in a way that influences policy formulation.

Human security and critical theory are also related because they also derive much of their strength from a dual policy framework resting upon the two mutually reinforcing pillars of protection and empowerment (HSU-OCHA, 2009). The operation of this framework introduces a hybrid approach which:

- Combines top-down norms, processes and institutions, including the establishment of the rule of law, good governance, accountability and social protective instruments with a bottom-up focus in which democratic processes support the important role of individuals and communities as participants in defining and implementing their essential freedoms.
- Helps identify gaps in the existing security infrastructure and detects ways to mitigate the impact of existing security deficits.
- Ensures the sustainability of programmes and policies as protection and empowerment are introduced in a systematic and preventative manner with a look to long-term stability.
- Reinforces peoples' ability to act on their own behalf.
- Strengthens the resilience of individuals and communities to conditions of insecurity.
- Encourages participatory processes.

The effect, according to HSU-OCHA (2009), should be viewed beyond the evaluation of the programme against indicators of efficiency, such as whether delivery was done on time, targets were met, budget were spent. Instead, the interest should be on the long-term consequences of the programme, on questions of legitimacy and about how and why the programme was developed and implemented. Through the protection and empowerment framework, they both provide better means to realise human rights and human development.

6.5 Contradictions: Human Security and Neo-liberalism

The aim of this section is to draw out the possible contradictions in human security and neo-liberalism to answer one of the research questions of this study: to what extent are human security and neo-liberalism compatible? The study argues that, although the goal of human security seem incompatible with those of neo-liberalism, it aim also has connections with market-based reforms. In practice human security relies on the state and the market to achieve its goals, however critical it might be of them in theory.

In Wilkin's opinion, human security is part of a well-organised debate in the history of political thought and practice that has centred upon the satisfaction of needs (Wilkin, 2001). He defined human security as a strand of contemporary debate about issues of equality and global social justice that liberate people from oppressive and exploitative power structures as seen in the imposition of the neo-liberal agenda. Its goal is simple: human emancipation. The reason why the human security goal looks incompatible with neo-liberalism is that, the latter's emphasis is on the state to facilitate entrepreneurial activities. For example, the way to satisfy education and health or generally human needs is through the market. This study argues that, that does not make sense in the case of Sierra Leone because people are poor, and as reported earlier, 52.9% of the population are living in poverty. So most people don't have money to spend in the market place. While the former is on the state to facilitate human development through improving education and health care.

Neo-liberal reforms specify eliminating barriers to trade and geographical restraint (within and between countries), ensuring the free flow of capital and commodities, stimulating the growth of private enterprise, and reducing the state's role in the economy (cf. Ahearne, 2009). By so doing, countries become globally competitive and reconstitute their society as an economic unit. Ahearne further claimed that, through freedom in the marketplace, each individual is held responsible for his/her own actions and wellbeing, leaving little room for shared aims, and the collectivism required by democracy (Springer in Peou, 2009). According to Ruthjersen (2007), competition is seen as promoting the allocation of resources in society with the greatest possible efficiency, and will lead to lower prices from the competitors benefiting the consumers, namely the people (Folland et al., 2007). It is argued that this will encourage businesses to improve their products and services, and ensure economic growth and profit (Edwards, 2002:41-46). Neo-liberals argue that the poor are ultimately expected to benefit from this through the 'trickle-down' concept, whereby overall economic growth eventually trickles down to the poor as demand for their labour, goods and services increases (See Johnstone, 2005: 35).

This study disagrees with this claim and argues that economic growth has not improved the general well-being of the poor in Sierra Leone. It is argued that the severity of the effects of neo-liberal reforms has the propensity to exacerbate inter-group tensions, strikes, riots and other forms of civil unrest. For example, Sierra Leone's HDI value was 0.359 in 2012, in the low human development category, placing the country at 177 out of 187 countries and territories in the world (HDR, 2013). According to an African Development Bank Report (2013), real GDP growth accelerated from 6% in 2011 to 16.7% in 2012, but this has not translated into improved standard of living. The rate of poverty had decreased by 13% between 2003 and 2011 to 53% with the decline being felt more in urban than rural areas (SLIHS, 2011). Urban poverty declined from 46.9% in 2003 to 31.2% in 2011. The district level poverty analysis showed that by 2011 most districts had converged to poverty levels between 50% and 60%, with the exception of Freetown at 20.7%, and 64% of households in the top two quintiles were found in the western urban areas (SLIHS, 2011).

Francis Ato Brown, the World Bank Country Manager for Sierra Leone said that:

“While economic growth has been strong in Sierra Leone, poverty and food insecurity have remained very high and human development indicators such as maternal health and survival are weak.”

He argues that:

“This is where a social safety net system will be very useful because it can reach the poorest families and help those who have been left behind” (Global Monitoring Report, World Bank, 2013).

This underscores the scale of human insecurity, and the need to focus on a social safety-net system illustrates that neo-liberalism fails manifestly in its alleged aims of reducing poverty through growth. Economic growth generates wealth that flows disproportionately to elites, donors, banks and other agents of global capitalism, it does not flow to the poor in Sierra Leone.

Education and health expenditures grew more slowly than GDP and population, and declined relative to GDP in Sierra Leone (DACO, 2008). Per capita health expenditure increased from \$9.40 to \$13.50 during 2003–07 (WHO recommends \$34 per capita). Health indicators remained among the worst in the world. In 2008, under-five and maternal mortality were 140 per 1,000 and 857 per 100,000 live births, and malaria mortality was 154 per 100,000 respectively (GoSL, 2010; WHO, 2010). For every 100,000 live births, the GoSL Report (2010) shows that 890 women who died from pregnancy-related causes, and the infant

mortality rate was 104.2 per 1000 live births. Between 2000 and 2007, primary and secondary school enrolment in Sierra Leone doubled, mostly through aid support (World Bank, 2007). However, only 9.5% of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education compared with 20.4% of their male counterparts (SLIHS, 2011). Further, 55% of men and 74% of women were considered illiterate. While 35% of the population are classified as youth, 70% of this group are currently without formal work (Agenda for Change, GoSL, 2007). This is significant because many people from this group lack basic education and are therefore without the required skills to get a job.

Concerning poverty reduction, the World Bank economist William Easterly (2001) undertook a study of the IMF structural adjustment programmes on poverty, and reached a number of interesting conclusions. He found that adjustment loans tended to reduce the effect of economic growth on poverty reduction. That is, in countries with a significant number of adjustment loans, the poor tended to be increasingly excluded from the development process, which means that they benefit less from economic expansion and conversely suffer more from economic contraction (Easterly, 2001:7). In the case of inequality the picture is even miserable. During the period 1975-1991 Garuda (2000) undertook a study of the effects of 58 IMF programmes based on Gini coefficients and the income of the poorest quintile of society. The study found significant deterioration in income distribution and the incomes of the poor in countries that participated in IMF programmes as compared with countries that did not.

This supports the argument that the neo-liberal reforms have failed to advance human security and human development in Sierra Leone, thus putting more strain on the population. Human security is emerging as a rallying cry to counter the neo-liberal ideology because it rests on the idea of rejecting both direct state control and all forms of social solidarity (Springer in Peou, 2009).

The World Bank, through the International Development Agency (IDA), is piloting a Social Safety Nets Project that will help set up a nationwide social safety-net system. This can be used to deliver cash transfers to the poorest households, enabling them to buy food, send children to school, and protect assets such as livestock (Global Monitoring Report, World Bank, 2012). The IDA has granted US\$7 million to Sierra Leone to fund this project in four districts, Kono, Bombali, Moyamba and Western Rural Districts which encompasses 12,000 households. While this adequately reflects the aspirations of the human security framework to reduce the number of citizens affected by poverty and the lack of social cohesion, the study argues that this is not a sustainable project arrangement system. It suggests that this

grant could have been invested to greater benefit in improving the education and health systems that are fundamental to empowering individuals.

In concluding, the objectives of human security seems incompatible with those of neo-liberalism, even though it also has connections with them. In practice it relies on the state and the market to achieve its goals, however critical it might be of them in theory. As Harvey (2005:117) said, neo-liberalism depends on a strong state and on strong legal institutions to ensure freedom and equality. At the same time, state governments have significantly increased expenditures on 'law and order' areas while strengthening regulatory arrangements governing social and economic processes (Carson, 2000).

6.6 Problem Within the Human Security Debate

Even though the human security concept has now been expanded from traditional security which prioritises the needs of the state to include basic needs of people in society. This does not mean there are no problems with the concept of human security, there are. One of the major problem within the human security debate is the way in which it has been taken up at different level by different actors and institutions like the international financial institutions. For example, when you look at the UNDP's report that has to do with human security, there is obviously a big intellectual and practical difference of how the World Bank, UNHCR and other organisations view human security. The concept has been taken up at different levels socially and politically. The problem is which version(s) of human security does states accept?

Is it going to be the one which argues for the redistribution of resources for the world's poor to ensure that their basic needs are satisfied? Or is it going to be the concept that actually, poverty is a security problem and what can be done to contain it. For example, the debate in the USA (at the time of writing) which centres on the border between Texas and Mexico, president Obama sided with the republican governor in Texas for the need to erect bigger fences to keep poor Mexicans from entering the United States. This is another way of conceptualising human security. Or is it going to be about what do we do to make sure that people have access to clean drinking water, access to better education, sanitation, health care, jobs and so on and how do we address these problems? For example, the Ebola crisis is a major problem in Sierra Leone (at the time of writing) and what do we do to address it? This is also a security concern and another way of thinking about human security. Hence, human security as a concept has been appropriated by states as a different kind of thing. However,

it has a humane significance and because it is contested politically and socially, part of this thesis is to engage in that contest.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown that human security is people-centred. It has emerged as a practical, useful policy and an alternative framework to neo-liberalism. Its specific focus is on addressing the concerns of human vulnerability. Therefore it is both an evaluative framework and a principle for challenging public policy. Echoing Wilkin, it is a strand of contemporary debate about issues of equality and global social justice that liberate people from oppressive and exploitative power structures as seen in the imposition of the neo-liberal agenda. Protection, participation and empowerment of people were shown as the three building blocks in achieving the goal of human security.

In contrast, the traditional security approach was meant to focus on the protection of the state, its boundaries, people, institutions, and values from external attacks. This way of providing security was criticised largely because it is considered inadequate to address the post-colonial social and economic problems that continue to affect the lives of the population. The chapter also discussed the origin and development of human security. Various initiatives taken by the Japanese, Canadian, and Norwegian Governments led the way in institutionalising the idea both in foreign policies that focus on pursuing their particular interests and in influencing the international scope and recognition of the concept. It was the UNDP, which, for the first time, explicitly articulated the importance of human security as a tool that guides policy-making and addresses human concerns.

The chapter also shows the connections that human security might have with critical theory, and argues that it might benefit from a fuller engagement with some of the key concepts that it takes from critical theory. It shows that they are both concerned with human emancipation and the integration of non-military mechanisms as means to security. They have universal assumptions about what people need, and they believe that the key to emancipation is for people to have the opportunity to take control of their lives. They significantly question prevailing structures of power and injustice in political organisation and economic distribution. Emancipating people today is to challenge the domination of the neo-liberal agenda and to ensure that the transformation of structures of political economy is in the interests of the marginalised.

More important, it also explores the possible contradictions in human security and neo-liberalism that, although its goal seems incompatible with those of neo-liberalism, it also has

connections with them. Evidence from this study suggests that human security in Sierra Leone has not improved. The severity of its effects, it was shown, has the propensity to foment inter-group tensions, strikes, riots and other forms of civil unrest. Even though the two are incompatible, the chapter shows that in practice, human security relies on the state and the market to achieve its goals, however critical it might be of them in theory.

Chapter 7

Education, Development and Human Security in Sierra Leone

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical account of the education system in Sierra Leone, the first part of the human security element that this study seeks to investigate. Education is the foundation for sustainable human security and development. This is evident in the human development index (HDI) which gives prominence to literacy and schooling as being central to the expansion of human capability and as aggregate indicators of human development (UNDP, HDR 1990). It is also widely accepted that the relationship between human insecurity and poor education is now both a national and an international phenomenon. Successive education initiatives have failed to end this relationship in the way that had been hoped. Raffo et al. (2007) attributed this to several factors such as differential in the distribution of educational opportunities, the cultures of poor communities, the dynamics of poor families, and the quality of schooling in disadvantaged areas. This historical account will set out the context in which the neo-liberal education reforms will be examined in the next chapter.

The chapter seeks to achieve two objectives: first, to provide the historical background of Sierra Leone's education system up until the end of the civil conflict in 2002. This will provide an overview of the education system in Sierra Leone; discusses the government education policy up until 2002; examines the structure of the education system, pre-1993 and post-1993. Second, to explain the relationship between education and human security as features of nation-state development goals. The chapter ends with a summary.

7.2 An Overview of the Education System in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's education system offers both academic and technical learning at all stages and is provided by public and private schools, colleges and universities. The teaching language in most learning institutions is English, the exemptions being a small number of Muslim schools which use Arabic. Public schools are made up of state schools and schools maintained by missions, local communities and other agencies. In many cases, these schools are supported by the state and are called "state-assisted schools". Assistance includes the provision of school subsidies, teaching and learning materials and payment of teachers' salaries. A "State School" is identified as one administered by, or on behalf of, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Sierra Leone (MEST-SL) and is, in most cases, owned by the Local Government and District Council (Nishimuko, 2008). A "Private

School” is one created by a person or corporate entity and function as a private business without getting public funds, and with the aim of making profit. Functionalism was the guiding principle of African education (Uwake et al., 2008) and this also applied to Sierra Leone. This simply mean that the education system emphasised social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and ethical and religious moral values (Fafunwa, 1974; Osokoya, 2002). All schools use a common curriculum and its approach, instructional objectives, content and delivery was useful and carefully incorporated. Over the last five decades, the guiding principles of the education system have been lost both in policy circles, and in political will and commitment.

7.2.1 Colonial Era Up Until Independence in 1961

The evolution and development of Western education in Sierra Leone started as far back as the 18th Century with the establishment of the colony for freed slaves (MEST-SL, 2007). When it became a British Crown Colony in 1808 the colonial government handed over the control of education to the Christian Missions, who, by 1840, were maintaining 28 primary schools in the Western Area and others in other regions (http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Sierra%20Leone/Sierra_Leone_ESP.pdf, page 5). The structure of education in Sierra Leone was modelled on the British system, and was used as an approach to handle social transformation. According to the Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan 2007:5), the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which arrived in 1804, was the main mission body because it received direct financial support from the British Government. The Plan also reveals that other Christian and Muslim Missions interested in providing formal education opened schools all over the Colony and the Protectorate. At Independence in 1961, it was reported in the Education Country Sector Report (CSR, 2007:16) that Sierra Leone inherited a British-type education system, aimed largely at the urban middle class (cf. Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan 2007:5). The Education Sector Plan indicated that the system was biased towards academically gifted students who entered tertiary education and found formal employment in government offices.

The standard of education in Sierra Leone before and immediately after independence was one of the best around the world (Bulder, 2007). The country has a rich history of human resources development through Western style education: it had the first school for boys in sub-Saharan Africa (CMS Grammar School), founded in 1845; and the first school for girls (Annie Walsh Memorial School) founded in 1849 (MEST-SL, 2010:7). According to Hirsh (2001), it once had the reputation as the “Athens of West Africa” because of its high level

of education and superior education resources in colonial times, and it had the first university (Fourah Bay College) in West Africa, established in 1827 (also see MEST-SL, 2010:7). The MEST-SL further stated that the country played an important role in the preparation of the first group of administrators, doctors and teachers in English-speaking West Africa in the first half of the last century.

A World Bank Report (2007) indicated that most Sierra Leonean were unable to access formal education or were forced by circumstances to work before completing primary school. The report described the educational system as an elitist system that excluded the majority of the population, and in consequence, a large pool of unskilled labour resulted. Given the exclusive nature of the colonial education system, it is not surprising that general literacy levels remained low. At independence, fewer than 15% of children aged 5–11 years attended school, and only 5% of children aged 12–16 years were in secondary school (Novelli, 2011). This historical analysis, according to Novelli, demonstrated how British colonialism produced a highly elitist and geographically uneven education system, which was continued by national elites. Higher education, and education provision for elites was prioritised, and the high proportion of current spending on higher education reflects a continuation of this approach, despite policy documents that profess to prioritising basic education (Novelli, 2011).

In 1936, according to Hillard (1957), more than 50% of children in the colony of Freetown attended school, while less than 3% of those in the protectorate did so (also see Novelli, 2011). By 1954, the percentage of children in schools in the protectorate increased marginally to only 8%, while in Freetown the figure rose to approximately 85% of children (cited in Novelli, 2011). The Krio-speaking population in Freetown, representing freed slaves and their descendants, were more privileged in education opportunities and access to jobs (provided to the educated) from the colonial period onward (Novelli, 2011). Regional disparities in access to education were still present immediately after the 2002 civil conflict, with Freetown's Western Region having a 75% enrolment, Southern Region 48%, Eastern Region 35% and the Northern Region only 25% (Women's Commission for Refugee, Women, and Children report, 2004).

7.2.2 Post-Independence Era Up Until 2002

However, as Bulder (2007) argues, the education system fell on hard times. Due to a long period of neglect, the country witnessed an erosion of standards. From 1970 to 1985, Bulder claims that the average growth rate for primary school enrolment was slightly more than

6.0%, while that for secondary school enrolment was just over 6.5%. From 1985 to 1990, the average annual growth rate for primary school enrolment fell to 2.0%, while that for secondary school enrolment fell to 1.6%. Besides these enrolment concerns, Bulder also noted that the outputs of institutions at the technical/vocational and teacher education levels had also been found wanting. Bulder attributed this to three decades of bad governance and policy weaknesses, followed by the civil war, which had caused massive deterioration in the education system. Most schools, especially outside Freetown, were closed. World Bank figures from 2001 revealed that of the 3,152 schools surveyed only 13% were useable at the time, 35% required reconstruction and 52% needed rehabilitation (World Bank, 2001).

Novelli (2011) argues that what we can learn from this historical legacy, beyond the obvious importance of colonialism in shaping education structures throughout the past few decades is, education's pivotal role in regulating social mobility. Its uneven and elitist nature clearly served as one of the drivers of the conflict that broke out in 1991 (MEST-SL, 2010). The great majority of people saw themselves as having no security of any sort in terms of their basic human needs. By the late 1980s, the education system had deteriorated to such an extent that only approximately 400,000 children were enrolled in primary school, which is approximately 55% of those who should have been in primary education (MEST-SL, 2010). According to Novelli (2011), in many rural areas, schooling had all but collapsed due to the austerity measures imposed during the structural adjustment period, and the lack of priority placed on education by the subsequent Governments of Sierra Leone. Education, Novelli claims rather than becoming a vehicle for developing social cohesion, equity and opportunity, had, by its virtual absence become a key driver in Sierra Leone's civil conflict. Stuart et al., (1996) estimated that during the civil war up to 70% of the school-age population had limited or no access to education, leaving a legacy of a lost generation of drop-outs. They claimed that hundreds of schools were severely damaged or completely destroyed. Initially, Stuart et al. argue that, the destruction of education institutions was concentrated outside of Freetown, but as the conflict spread to the Western Area, and Freetown in particular, the urban schools were also targeted. Thousands of teachers and children were killed, maimed or displaced and many more were either forcibly or voluntarily recruited into the ranks of the different warring factions (Stuart et al., 1996). The study agrees with Novelli (2011) that both the greed of political leaders and genuine political grievances, rooted in historical and geographical structural inequalities and a mixture of both, had played a very important role in the cause of the civil war. The explanations of these causes have

important policy implications for international institutions engaged in humanitarian and international development activities in Sierra Leone.

7.3 Government Education Policy up Until 2002

Taking into considerations its statutory mandate, the Ministry of Education develops the Government goals of education, taking cognisance of the contribution of international organisations. After Sierra Leone became independent in 1961, missions still managed their schools but the Government started to play a greater part in this sector. Many actions were taken and policies developed which led to an increase in enrolments, which was, unfortunately, not matched by an increase in education infrastructure. Policy development in education in Sierra Leone predated the Education Act of 1964 and continued up to 1970, when the first education policy was published. According to MEST-SL (2007:5), the 1964 Education Act provided the framework for all other policies in education, such as the Policy White Paper on Education in 1970, the Education Sector Review of 1976 and 1979. Further, the 1989 Taskforce Report prepared the ground for a change to the 6-3-3-4 system of education in 1993 and the establishment of a National Commission for Basic Education (MEST-SL, 2007). This Commission gave importance to technical education and skills training, and suggested that every child should have access to nine years of inclusive basic education.

The recommendation was seen as a valiant endeavour to shift the country away from a mostly grammar school type of education, which takes into consideration neither the different abilities of the learners nor their socio-economic needs. The reform aimed also to incorporate a technical component of education (MEST-SL, 2007) to improve the deterioration of human security in the country. Unfortunately, the full execution of this reform was hindered by political crisis and the war which broke out in 1991. Indeed, the 1992 coup which brought the NPRC to power (see chapter four), the ensuing periods of military rule, and an intensified civil war eventually brought the education sector to a standstill (MEST-SL, 2007). This further exacerbated the illiteracy rate, eroded the quality of education and affected access to education services. According to Bennell & Harding (2004), the social, economic, and physical infrastructure was destroyed, and nearly 90% of primary schools across the country were completely destroyed or heavily damaged. The Government, they noted, had also been impoverished and become dependent on foreign aids for half of its budget. The year 1993 saw Sierra Leone putting into practice the Universal Primary Education (UPE) initiatives with donors' support. While the 6-3-3-4 system might

have been a very good policy objective put forward by the Government, the education system on the other hand lacked the infrastructure, institutional capacity, and resources for implementation, especially so when prominence was attached to technical education and skills training.

Two years later, in 1995, a New Education Policy was announced to provide a framework for a new education system. This change in direction was also recommended in a 1996 paper (Stuart et al., 1996), in which the need for increased access to quality primary education, and greater emphasis on technical and vocational options was articulated. Two years after the introduction of this New Education Policy, the New Education Master Plan (NEMP) was developed in 1997. The justification behind the introduction of NEMP was that, at the time Sierra Leone was ranked bottom on education development, and adult literacy rate was estimated at 21%, of which 31% were male and 11% were female (NEMP, 1997, also see <http://www.pamoja-west-africa.org/English/Documents/SLNFEpolicyanalysis.pdf>).

The introduction of the New Education Policy and the National Education Master Plan, and the significance attached to the recommendations made one year later in a 1996 paper, were all influenced by the following events in education at the national and international level such as:

- 1) Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 indicated that children are the rights-holders whose right to education should be realised by the duty-bearers at the national, sub-national, community and household levels. In unstable situations where the duty-bearers have difficulty fulfilling their obligations to respect and realise the child's rights, the international humanitarian community often finds education as an excellent delivery point for human security measures, to promote the empowerment and protection of children living in especially difficult circumstances (CHS, 2003). Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child also stresses that the right to education must be achieved on the basis of equal opportunity, reflecting the fact that vast numbers of children suffer discrimination in access to education. However, in practice, it is not always easy to reach (coverage) the most vulnerable groups of children with humanitarian assistance. The issue of coverage is important in our efforts to alleviate the differences between different social groups.
- 2) The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 also influenced the changes to education in Sierra Leone. This event was organised by the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP. Representatives of the international community (155 countries, as well as representatives from some 150 organisations)

participated in this conference because the economic crisis in Africa and Latin America had foreshadowed the spread of basic education in these regions (Yusa, 2012). The conference highlighted the importance of basic education and established global goals to achieve EFA. Another significance of this conference is that it was the first international event that recognised basic education both as a human right and as an efficient investment mechanism for economic growth in developing countries (Yusa, 2012). However, Yusa asserted that, it is EFA which unites the education policy in developing countries and the aid policy directed to education by the international community, stating the right of all children to access the facilities required to meet their basic learning needs.

- 3) The need for better education was also enshrined in the constitution of Sierra Leone: “The government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy, and, to this end, shall direct its education policy towards achieving: free adult literacy programmes, free compulsory basic education at primary and junior secondary school levels, and free senior secondary education as and when practicable” (Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991:4).
- 4) The World Summit for Children estimated that two-thirds of the world’s 100 million children without basic education were girls, and set goals for increasing the education of female children (Fourth World Conference on Women, 4-15, 1995). These goals were endorsed by the 1995 World Conference on Women held in Beijing, which attributed the disproportionately low number of girls in education to “customary attitudes, child labour, early marriages, lack of funds and inadequate schooling facilities, teenage pregnancies and gender inequalities in society as well as in the family”. The Conference called for full implementation of Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 5) In 2000, the World Education Forum (WEF), held in Dakar, set a Framework for Action, reconfirming international goals and identifying strategies for attaining them (Nishimuko, 2008:197-98). At the WEF, the international community established six new goals: to expand early childhood care and education; to provide free and compulsory primary education for all; to promote learning and life skills for young people and adults; to increase adult literacy by 50%; to achieve gender parity by 2005, to achieve gender equality by 2015; and to improve the quality of education as recommended at the Dakar Framework for Action (WEF, 2000). In this forum, the

international community agreed not only on the need for expansion of access to education but also on the requirement for improvement in the quality of education.

- 6) The Millennium Summit adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the year 2000. It set eight additional goals: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to achieve UPE; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality rate; improve maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; to ensure environmental sustainability; and to develop a global partnership for development. The MDGs have aimed to achieve universal primary education and gender equality by utilising the concept of partnership in the world in the education sector by 2015 (MDGs, 2000).
- 7) The Government also announced a free primary education policy in 2000, in order to realise one of the international goals connected with the MDGs. Under this policy, it began paying tuition fees and providing teaching and learning materials, including core textbooks, and carrying the responsibility for National Primary School Education (NPSE) fees. Furthermore, according to Nishimuko (2008), the Government established fines up to Le500,000, imprisonment, or both for parents or guardians who fail to send their children to school. In practice, as this study suggest, this policy was ineffective.
- 8) The changes in the education system were also influenced by the passing of a number of Acts in 2001 such as the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Act (2001), the Polytechnics Act (2001), and the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA) Act (2001). Other social/human development policies such as the National Youth Policy, the National Policy on the Advancement of the Status of Women, and the National Policy on Gender Mainstreaming also have strong education and capacity building components (MEST-SL, 2007).

The above initiatives significantly influenced the change in education policy in Sierra Leone. A common theme was that education policy in developing countries and aid policy by the international community agree on one over-arching objective, and that is to provide quality education for all.

7.4 The Structure of the Education System in Sierra Leone

This section explains the structure of the education system in Sierra Leone before 1993 and thereafter. A schematic diagram is provided to illustrate the latter.

7.4.1 The Pre-1993 Education System

The pre-1993 education system comprises of pre-school (ages 1 to 5) but was not obligatory and managed by private institutions. Children spent seven years at primary school beginning class 1 at age 5 and ending class 7 at age 12 (MEST-SL, 2007; also see Bulder, 2007 for a detailed analysis). At the end of this the pupils took an external examination called the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) later renamed the Selective Entrance Examination (SEE). The examination, organised by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), evaluated pupils for admission to secondary school at the age of 12. The leaving age for secondary school varied from 17 to 19 years. At the end of the first five years of secondary school, pupils took the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level examination to proceed either to sixth form, college or university, or to re-sit or join the workforce. A pupil could choose to go into university at the first level if he/she did not want to spend two years in the Sixth Form training for university education. At the end of Sixth Form, he/she would take the Advanced Level GCE Examination (A Level). Passing this exam allowed a pupil to go into first year at university, avoiding the introductory level. Those who did not pass entered university at the introductory level. To gain admission at the university, a student is required to excel in five subjects including English Language, Mathematics and one Science subject at GCE Ordinary Level.

Technical or vocational education lasted for one, two or three years and was intended to give chances to those academically unable pupils to learn trades. However, these institutions were ignored and under-resourced and so eventually failed. Teaching provided in teacher training colleges lasted for three years, and trained teachers for primary and secondary schools, particularly those who did not meet the conditions to enrol at university but excelled with no less than four subjects at the GCE Ordinary Level. The Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, for example, prepared teachers for secondary schools. Successful students were presented with the Higher Teachers Certificate (HTC) upon completion. University education lasted for three or four years. By 1993 the University of Sierra Leone had three principal colleges: Fourah Bay College; N'jala University College; and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences. It also had the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM) and the Institute of Education. According to Les Levidow, capitalism has a particular stake in higher education (in Ross & Gibson ed., 2007) as will be shown in Chapter 8. He explained that universities define the skills of professional workers for the labour markets, reinforce ruling ideologies, and represent the needs of the state, industry and those of society (in Ross & Gibson ed., 2007). Despite this prevalent role, Levidow noted

that students and staff often succeed in been critical about the education provided and even challenging the capitalist ideas in it.

The universities saw a substantial rise in student numbers, although teaching had been under-resourced and so appeared as an “inefficiency” problem, solved by standardising the curricula (in Ross & Gibson ed., 2007). Knowledge was packaged in text-book-type formats, so that students became customers for the products. Moreover, higher education became synonymous with training for employability and problem-solving (in Ross & Gibson ed., 2007). Les Levidow called this recent tendency “academic capitalism”. Even though university staffs were still mostly state funded, they were gradually driven into entrepreneurial rivalry for outside funds. Under such pressure, staffs devised “institutional and professorial market or market-like efforts to secure external monies” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Levidow (2007:238) argues that universities were advised to embrace market enterprise models of providing knowledge, skills, curriculum, finance, accounting, and managing organisation to justify state-funding and protect themselves from competitive threats. These changes can be viewed within the wider neo-liberal strategies for restructuring society in the idea of a market place that will be discussed in Chapter 8.

7.4.2 The Post-1993 Education System

The 6-3-3-4 system of education was introduced in 1993. This system of education articulates seven major objectives for education in Sierra Leone:

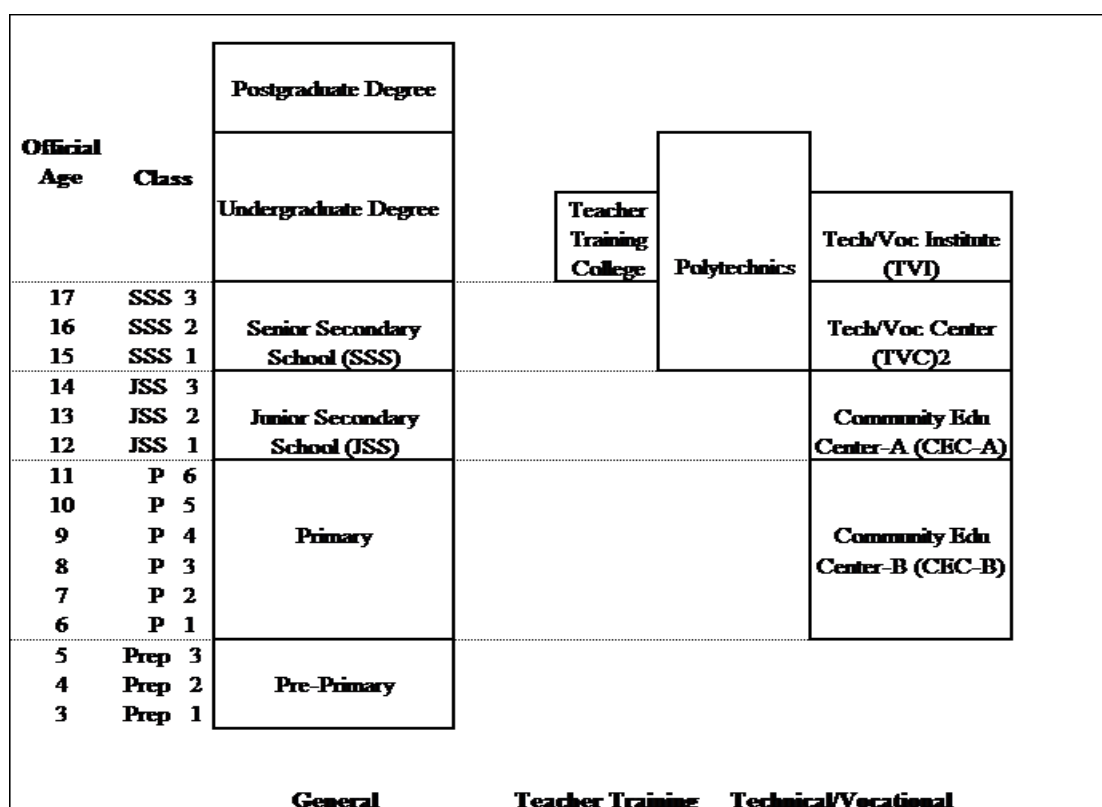
- To provide a broad-based education for children from Class 1 to Junior Secondary School (JSS) through the creation of relevant curricula and teaching/learning resources.
- To introduce a well-reasoned development incentives such as cost-recovery measures for example scholarships, work-study programs, and access to basic education especially for girls.
- To improve the quality and relevance of education.
- To expand technical and vocational education within the formal and non-formal sectors of education.
- To increase opportunities for the acquisition of literacy, numeracy, and technical and vocational skills within the formal and non-formal sectors of education.
- To provide equity in education by enforcing the policy of non-discrimination in all schools, as well as ensuring the similarity of standards and quality of education for all children regardless of where they attend school.

- To provide the means for children to develop relevant skills, attitudes, and values that could enable them to be effective and responsible citizens.

Source: Country Analysis Education, Sierra Leone, by Janneke Bulder (2007)

Below is a schematic diagram showing the structure of the 6-3-3-4 system of education.

Figure 7.0 Schematic diagramme of the 6-3-3-4 system of education



Source: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology Sierra Leone (2007)

7.4.2.1 Pre-School

Figure 7.0 shows that nursery education is for kids aged 3-5 years old and was intended to be non-chargeable and obligatory. But as reported in the work carried out by Carpenter et al. (2011), pre-school education is limited and concentrated mostly in urban areas. It is meant to assist with the all-inclusive progress of the child and set out the basis of further successful education. This was a very good policy but in the event, it was not free. The Government failed to support this policy and, as a result, there was lack of education infrastructure and resources effectively to advance the policy of pre-school for children. Sierra Leone's Education Sector Programme (ESP) recognises that Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) contributes to later performance and retention at school, and is therefore critical to achieving UPE. Providing better quality ECCE programmes was difficult, with vying needs

for funds and importance placed on primary education and with inadequate donor interest in assisting with this level of education. This saw the entry of private providers offering nursery education at a very high cost to those who can afford to pay. This means that poor families are not able to send their children to pre-school. It is clearly documented that investing in a strong ECCE element in schooling will benefit the country in the long term (MEST-SL, 2011).

7.4.2.2 Primary Education

Primary education under the post-1993 system is 6 years for children aged 6-11 years. This is to be provided free and is mandatory for children in this age group. This category of education accentuates the attainment of reading, basic mathematical competence, speaking, writing and critical-thinking skills. There are no specific criteria for enrolment and it is available to all children of the correct age. It represents the first part of a child's basic education and is primarily delivered in recognised primary schools. There are also non-formal providers of primary education for older children and youths. The education policy of free primary education was seen as a way to encourage enrolment at that level, and at the same time, to increase the number of teachers and their performance (MEST-SL, 2011).

The Teacher Education Training and Development Team in 2002 in Sierra Leone stated that teacher training is a vital component of the entire education system. According to the team members, the new structure required the training of teachers in sufficient numbers and of adequate quality to achieve a reduction in the teacher-pupil ratio to 1:45. They recognise that providing trained teachers and the relatively small class size should form a significant part of the child's education, imparting a sound basic grasp of the relevant facts of the country and its relationship to the world. Natural sciences and social studies received considerable attention at this level. Continuous assessment of pupils was also introduced as a way of monitoring their progress.

7.4.2.3 Junior Secondary School

Junior Secondary School (JSS) education follows primary education and lasts for 3 years. It is also compulsory, and was made gradually without charge. This is available to all pupils who have attained basic literacy and numeracy skills after the successful completion of the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) in Class 6. The JSS education provides basic wide-ranging education and training for specialised, vocational and Upper Secondary School education. The curriculums presented at this level are divided into core specialities, which

are mandatory for all JSS pupils, and electives, which are chosen for study by the pupils with the help of guidance counsellors and their parents (MEST-SL, 2011). The aim is to introduce courses aiding the acquisition of nation-wide needed, marketable skills and to provide training in community consciousness and accountability. Continuous assessment also forms part of monitoring pupils' progress. At the end, all pupils sit the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), also conducted by WAEC. JSS marks the end of basic and compulsory education.

7.4.2.4 Senior Secondary School

Senior Secondary School (SSS) education follows the JSS and lasts for another three years. There are two types of SSS education (MEST-SL, 2011): first, one that offers general education and operates a comprehensive curriculum. This, the Ministry of Education says, caters for pupils whose interests and aptitudes focused on specialised subject areas such as science, mathematics, technology, liberal arts, and business studies. Pupils at this level are offered a set of core (compulsory) subjects and some optional subjects. It trains pupils for university education or specialised programmes. Second, one that offers Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). In general, SSS is available to pupils who meet the government-agreed conditions at the BECE. At the end of SSS pupils sit either for the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) or the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) examination.

Post-secondary and non-tertiary education programmes connect the boundary between senior secondary and tertiary education. The entry criteria is at least a BECE certificate. Some pupils may have attempted WASSCE, but have not met the minimum requirement needed to enrol into tertiary level programmes. These programmes are usually more focussed than those offered at SSS. They lead towards the award of a certificate and are generally provided at Technical and Vocational Institutes, Agricultural Institutes, Junior Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics.

7.4.2.5 Tertiary Education

Tertiary education follows the senior secondary level. It is provided by polytechnics, professional colleges and universities. Minimum criteria for admission are agreed by each institution, but a pre-requisite is either WASSCE or NVQ. Tertiary education programmes lead to the award of diplomas, certificates, and degrees. As with other levels in the education system, the tertiary level suffers from a lack of facilities, resources, and qualified staff

necessary to deliver the level of teaching required to achieve quality higher education (MEST-SL, 2011). Tertiary institutions receives a huge allocation of the Government's education budget but has the least external support. Given the financial cut in the sector, the short-fall in delivering better education is notable. While admission data and benefit of progressing to tertiary education are increasing, the institutions do not have the capacity to meet demand effectively, and courses offered do not adequately match job market requirement (MEST-SL 2011). University programmes are oriented to teaching and research. Teacher education is also offered by polytechnics and universities. According to the Ministry of Education, professional schools such as the School of Nursing; the Hotel and Tourism Training Centre; the Institute of Library, Archive, and Information Studies; and the Law School are also entrusted with the responsibility to train professionals.

7.4.2.6 Polytechnics, Trade and Vocational Centres

The technical and vocational element of higher education is intended to grapple with the lack of skilled manpower in the country. The objectives, according to the Government, are to boost the number of locally, trained, poorer middle-level, working class workers; to create a more well-educated, mathematically competent, middle-level workforce to augment national development; to embolden women and girls to take part in national development through the attainment of technical and vocational skills; and to construct a helpful environment for the development of suitable local technology (MEST-SL, 2011). According to the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone, there are three levels of the technical and vocational education structure: first, a successful completion of Levels One, Two and Three at the polytechnics will lead to a certificate. Second, the Level Two programme will lead to an Ordinary National Diploma (OND) after two years; and third, the Level Three to a Higher National Diploma (HND) after a period of three years. This is the highest qualification. Similarly, the Education Ministry also notes that at the trade/technical/vocational centres, pupils spend three years leading to the technical/vocational certificate (T/V certificate) Stage Three; T/V certificate Stage Two after two years; and T/V certificate Stage One after one year. The community education/animation centres offer courses to early school leavers and adult learners, which qualify them for entry into technical/vocational centres.

7.4.2.7 Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education (NFE) is designed for older children, youths and adults who wasted years of formal basic education. This is provided through the Community Education Centres

(CEC) and offers basic maths, reading, writing and speaking skills that will permit this category of students to re-enter the formal education system if they choose to; or remain on the non-formal route to gain additional skills; or to go in work. The National Institute for Education, Training, and Research (NIETAR) has been entrusted by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology to develop a qualification framework that covers both the formal and non-formal sectors, and creates structures of development between the two. In their diagnostic report on TVET compiled in 2012, Carton & Kingombe indicated that CECs are established at chiefdom level and operate their classes within the centre structure and on an outreach basis (Carton & Kingombe, 2012). Where there are no CECs in place, lessons are organised through outreach only. They said that CECs offer a variety of lessons including literacy, life skills, and income generation. They also provide skills training using flexible hours to reach the most vulnerable. However, they pointed out that the responsibility is on the community to find an organisation within which the CEC can be based and to manage its day to day running. The study argues that very poor communities will be unable to provide a structure for the running of such institution without support from the Government through Local Councils, or from private and not-for-profit organisations. Carton & Kingombe said that, in 2010 two Literacy Management Committees (LMCs) were established in two chiefdoms to oversee the work of the centres within their respective areas, and to assist in raising revenue. By and large, the CECs and other associated learning courses lack the resources in terms of materials, and more funding is needed to guarantee that a satisfactory standard of education is extended within these communities.

Carton & Kingombe (2012) also argue that the majority of participants in the non-formal education classes are women, and the programme is targeted at developing skills that are useful to women. Some centres offer income skills-training in specialities such as soap-making and gari-processing, according to the interests of the participants. A major concern, however, was that, even though majority of the participants are women, programmes should not be designed to develop skills useful only to women, but for everyone in the community interested in learning these skills. Carton & Kingombe stated that there is access to a loan system in 13 centres across 4 districts. These additional opportunities are a strong incentive for women to attend the centres and to complete their courses.

It is important to differentiate between the roles of CECs and TVET institutions. CECs offer basic skills-training for income generation. CECs are not intended for the provision of formal schooling, even though many of the skills, knowledge, and behaviour learned in these institutions are similar to those in some technical and vocational schools and institutes

(MEST-SL, 2011). All CECs, of whatever kind, are administered by the Non-Formal Education Directorate in collaboration with the Inspectorate at District Education Offices (DEO) and the Local Councils. Hence, there is the need for institutional capacity-building for the Directorate at all levels. There are connections between the formal and non-formal courses. It is typical for learners who wish to do so to transfer from CECs to formal schools after satisfying established admission standards. Similarly, it is usual for CECs to change to recognised primary and technical/vocational schools and institutes at a future stage of their existence if they so wish. Once values and other measures are established and imposed there will be no repetition of effort between formal TVET schools and NFE CECs. The previous institutions providing NFPE and/or CREPS are in the course of being transformed to formal primary schools or turned into CECs. Therefore, letting people to obtain skills driven by the implementation of TVET policy, which makes them accessible to the labour market, is the best approach for tackling the needs of older children, youths, and adults who were unable to acquire formal basic education.

The NCTVA is required to co-ordinate TVET in order to guarantee consistency between the formal and non-formal components of the sector, as well as to ensure that the programme at every level is responsive to national development and manpower priorities. It acknowledges the need to work together with all interested parties in putting together a workable system.

7.5 The Relationship Between Human Security and Education as Features of Non-State Development Goal

This section explores the link between human security and education. The importance of education is now widely recognised, and it is significantly linked to economic progress and human security. Most nation states, and even global institutions such as the World Bank, are arguing compellingly that there is no policy more successful in furthering development than empowering people through education. The World Conference on “Education for All” used the term ‘basic education’ to refer to “all forms of organised education and training that meet basic learning needs. These needs include literacy and numeracy, and the general knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that people require to survive, to develop their capacities, to live and work in dignity, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning” (UNESCO, 2008). Meeting all of these needs enhances human security. The Conference deliberately chose to define education in terms of learning results rather than levels of instruction.

Basic education, therefore, provides the basis for all future education and learning. Its goal, as it concerns those in the pre-school, primary, and junior secondary school-age population, whether enrolled in school or not, is to produce children who are happy with themselves and with others, who find learning exciting and develop inquiring minds, who begin to build up a store of knowledge about the world and, more important, seek knowledge that they can use and develop throughout their lives (UNESCO, 2008). It is aimed at all the important goals of education: learning to know, to do, to be (i.e. to assume one's duties and responsibilities) and to live together with others, as outlined in *Education: The Treasure Within*, the report of the Independent Commission on Education for the 21st Century published in 1996 by UNESCO. It is, therefore, not only the basis for the enduring acquisition of knowledge, but also the foundation for sustainable development and human security.

Those people who presently lack access to schools, or are poorly served by schools, represent a large group, well over a billion people, and are vital for the future (UNESCO, 2008). Girls and women are in the majority. They are, or will be, the first and most influential teachers of their children. The goal of educating young children, as the study suggests, is to ensure their health, development, happiness, well-being, and adjustment to the environment in which they live. If this goal is not achieved, UNESCO (2008) argues that the future of these children is compromised and the prospects of sustainable development diminished.

Hage et al. (1988) argued that certain dynamics must be operative for mass schooling to contribute to economic growth and change in the labour as well as economic structure (cf. <http://stclements.edu/grad/gradhedd.pdf>). One of these dynamics, they argued, should engender a connection between the content of schooling and the socio-economics imperatives of the society served in order to enhance human security. Hage et al. observed that the economic returns to schooling thus been heavily on the degree of relevance between the product of education and the economic exigencies of the society. This position is in line with the thrust of the World Bank's report on new strategies of an agenda for Africa in 1989, which claimed that, the key to recovery in developing nations would be a greater and more appropriate investment in their human resources (cf. <http://stclements.edu/grad/gradhedd.pdf>). The report suggested that low productivity resulting from an inappropriately educated population has been at the heart of developing nation's economic problems, and therefore affect human security. Unemployment, which has also been directly associated to the content and quality of the education process in a number of countries in Africa as a whole and in Sierra Leone in particular, is the challenging experience among many school leavers.

Kelly & Donway argued that in order for citizens to be able to exercise their democratic freedoms, a central theme in human security, education should be a fundamental prerequisite (cf. Wilkin, 2001:59). They noted that literacy, numeracy and the development of our creative potentials are central to our ability to act as critical, reasoning beings, making judgements about the factors that affect our daily lives. Therefore an important measure of human security will be the level of global and nationwide spending on education and the impediments to such expenditures. Likewise, Wilkin argues that, in order for citizens to be able to develop their ideas about politics, economy and culture, it is necessary that there is an adequate supply of information that is diverse and enables the challenge of received opinions. In essence, as Wilkin observes, this is a classic liberal ideal about the need for free speech.

Human security is related to a more unbiased provision of education. This establishes a discussion on how the poor or deprived in society can be offered the opportunity to improve themselves and their families in order to achieve human security. And of these means, as the UNESCO (2010) study claims, the most essential is education, particularly basic education. According to the study, over 100 million children between the ages of 6 and 11 have never attended school, and tens of millions more enter school only to drop out within a few months or years. Moreover, the study reports that there are over 800 million illiterate adults, most of who have never been enrolled in school. The first prerequisite in the pursuit for development and equity, according to this study, must be to change this situation and make schooling of quality available to all. This should be the goal.

The UNESCO study in 2008 argues that the provision of basic education for adults aims at empowering people. This is another theme that is central to human security. It is, in the words of the Amman Affirmation, the document summing up the mid-decade review of progress towards EFA, "...the key to establishing and reinforcing democracy, to development which is both sustainable and humane and to peace founded upon mutual respect and social justice." Human security, as the Special Adviser on African Affairs at the United Nations (2005) put it, involves "protecting and empowering people, both at the individual and community levels, is essential to national and international security". Empowerment through universal basic education could potentially provide people with knowledge and skills to achieve human security, while illiteracy is greatly limiting the social emancipation of women (UNESCO study, 2008). It is the problem of illiteracy that needs to be addressed. Certainly, in a world in which resourcefulness and learning play an ever more

significant part, the right to education is nothing less than the right to take part in the life of the modern world.

The UNESCO (2008) study therefore concluded that, if our vision of the future is a world based on democracy, striving to achieve greater social justice and economic opportunity, and concerned to improve the quality of life and preserve the environment, then basic education has to be the first order of business, for it holds the power to contribute to all of these goals by enabling people to take their personal destinies into their own hands and play their role in shaping the common destiny of humanity. The study recognised that, sustainable development cannot be achieved by a small minority on behalf of the vast majority. It argues that it will require the contribution and commitment of each and all. That is why it is important to give all people the opportunities – beginning with elementary education – to take part in modelling a sustainable future, a concern that is at the heart of the human security.

Access to quality education can enable people to achieve their security. There is no doubt that, as the policy brief from the International Institute for Applied Systems and Analysis (IIASA, 2008) stated, “Education is a fundamental determinant not only of health, demographic trends, and an individual’s income, but also of a country’s aggregate level of economic growth.” The IIASA agree with the long-held rhetoric that human capital formation (a population’s education and health status) plays a significant role in a country’s economic development and hence the security of her citizens. Better education and a healthy population lead not only to higher individual income, but are also a necessary (although not always sufficient) precondition for long-term economic growth and the attainment of human security (IIASA, 2008).

There is also a strong link between the goal of human security and those of education. Education is one of the principal means of raising awareness about human rights and making a defence against old and new threats posed to human security (UNESCO study, 2008). For example, considering education as a basic human right creates a pathway to maximise individual potential, extend freedoms, build capabilities and open up more opportunities (DfID’s Education Strategy document for Sierra Leone, 2010-2015). Quality education will prepare future generations with the ever-changing expertise and capabilities necessary to achieve human security and sustainable development. Better education leads to an influential transformation in people’s lives and hence their human security. It is important because it reveals the human capability necessary to guarantee a more non-violent, successful and

greener future for all of us. Guaranteeing that all children obtain quality basic education is not only a moral duty, it is also an essential investment in our common future.

Through education, the battle is fought, not only against ignorance, but also against other forms of insecurity (UNESCO study, 2008). Education helps appease the daily violence in relationships between individuals. Investment in education also brings significant gains in freedom from fear and want. Mingat (2005), for example, claimed that there is strong evidence linking levels of education-enrolment, particularly levels of learning, to economic growth, improved health and nutritional outcomes encourage responsible birth control and social stability. These gains, according to Mingat, underpins the critical role of education in achieving all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and are often greater for girls than boys when they complete a full cycle of quality education (Mingat, 2005). Education, Mingat argues, brings about a sustainable improvement in living conditions. It teaches people to take better care of their health. Without education, people may have no hope, no dignity, and no rights. That is why providing access to education requires getting the education policy right in the first place.

UNESCO (2008) study argues that education provides the values, attitudes, and skills required to meet the emerging challenges of contemporary societies and for the full development of human personality. The study notes that, a commitment to human security plays an important role in fulfilling the injunctions of UNESCO's Constitution to contribute to peace and security, by promoting collaboration among nations through education and in asserting the values of peace, democracy, justice, tolerance, and freedom of expression that the organisation has defended from its inception. The education framework is also one of the most important ways of disseminating the concept of human security. Teachers, schools, universities, research centres and training institutions have a particular responsibility for promoting awareness of the global and universal nature of human security at all levels of education (UNESCO, 2008).

Hanushek & Wößmann (2007) argued that countries with more educated populations enjoy higher rates of economic growth and less inequality. More recently, evidence has shown that it is not only the number of years spent in school, but also what is learned in school, that counts. A recent study found that whilst an additional year of schooling was associated with a 0.37% increase in GDP, there would eventually be an increase to 1% if combined with improved earning outcomes. According to Colclough et al. (2009), education is positively associated with lifetime earnings. They claimed that each extra year of education raises lifetime earnings by about 10%, and returns on investment in education are higher for low

income countries and for women. Bledsoe et al. (1999) claimed that education, especially for girls, helps to improve health and birth control. For example, Bledsoe et al. argue that, children of educated parents are healthier, better nourished, and more likely to survive as infants. Across developing countries, evidence suggests that an additional year of schooling reduces infant mortality by between 5% and 10% (Mensch et al., 1986). The UNESCO study in 2008 also indicated that a strong relationship exists between levels of school achievement in science and awareness of global environmental problems. Both, the study argues, are associated with a greater sense of responsibility for supporting sustainable environmental management. Mosselson et al. (2009) explained that education can play an important part in the emergency response to conflict or fragility, in the long-term process of reconstruction and building stability, and in promoting civil engagement and democracy. Empirical evidence links levels and distribution of education achievement to indicators of democracy, stability, and security (see for example Green et al., 2001; Ritzen et al., 2002; and Putnam, 2004).

Therefore human development through education is one of the basic requirements for human security. Other scholars have argued that, if one accepts that the aim of education is to help people realise their potential so that they are able to play an active role in obtaining what they need for their welfare, and for exercising their universally recognised rights, then the link between education and human security is evident (UNESCO study, 2008). As Nobel Prize laureate in Economics, Amartya Sen, has stressed, “With its particular adaptation to its rich vision and perspective, human security stands on the shoulders of human development.” The advancement of human security draws from human rights education, which underpins the teaching of doctrines and standards helpful to human security. Education systems, as the UNESCO study claimed, are well-positioned to play a fundamental role in fostering the active listening, critical thinking, creative problem solving, cooperation, development of attitudes of tolerance, equality and non-discrimination, self-respect and respect for others that promote human rights and, therefore, human security.

7.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter has analysed the history of the education system in Sierra Leone up until the end of the civil conflict in 2002, and before the introduction of the neo-liberal reforms. Functionalism was shown to be the guiding principle of the education system after independence. This emphasised social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and ethical and moral values. Its methodology, instructional objectives, content and delivery

were practical and well-integrated. The chapter shows that over the last five decades all these values have been lost in policy circles and practices, because of the absence of political commitment. The poor performance of education between 1970 and 2002 has been attributed to bad governance, policy weaknesses and the civil war at a later stage. This affected the enrolment rate and quality of education provided in both primary and secondary schools, and led to lack of education infrastructure. It was shown that, increases in enrolment were not matched with corresponding increases in education infrastructure, thus worsening the existing problem.

The Government put forward a series of policy documents in order to move the country away from a predominantly grammar school type of education, which took account neither of the varied talents of the pupils nor of their socio-economic needs, and to incorporate technical component of education. This move was influenced by the deteriorating situation of the education system and significant events such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989; the World Conference on 'Education for All' in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990; the constitution of Sierra Leone; the World Summit for Children in 2000; the World Education Forum, held in Dakar; the Millennium Summit which adopted the Millennium Development Goals and the passing of a number of other Acts locally. These events highlight the importance of education both as a human right and as an efficient investment mechanism for economic growth and human security.

The relationship between education and human security was also discussed. It shows that education is the keystone in achieving human security, and the main tool to encourage the emergence of an educated society and in shaping a sustainable future. By meeting people's fundamental learning needs, education empowers them. Therefore, there is no policy more effective in promoting development than empowering people through education, a vital prerequisite in attaining human security. This, as the chapter shows, will also enable citizens to exercise their democratic freedoms, another central theme in the human security debate. In the next chapter, the study turns to the neo-liberal education reform in Sierra Leone.

Chapter 8

Neo-liberal Education Reform in Sierra Leone

“Provision of quality, relevant and equitable learning opportunities for all is the policy thrust and overarching objective of education in Sierra Leone.”

Algali et al. (2005)

8.1 Introduction

The above statement sets out the policy aims for education development in Sierra Leone as a way of getting people out of poverty and enhancing their human security. This chapter examines how effective these policies have been in practice. The Government of Sierra Leone recognises the fact that, as stated in the National Education Policy in 2010, unequal access to education threatens the country's hard won stability and future. This chapter will shed light on the policies introduced by post-civil war governments with a view to reforming the education system in Sierra Leone in accord with neo-liberal policy prescriptions. The necessity for these reforms stemmed from the fact that the education system had failed to improve access to and the quality of education, the literacy rate and human security of the citizens. The inadequacy of and general dissatisfaction with the public education system was another major factor. Such failure is believed to have led to low educational attainment, inequitable access and the provision of poor quality education.

The social, economic, and physical infrastructure was destroyed, and nearly 90% of primary schools across the country were completely obliterated or heavily damaged (Nishimuko, 2008). The government was impoverished and was largely dependent for revenue on foreign donors, who provided approximately half of the government budget (Bennell et al., 2004). Other recent developments have also served as catalysts for reforming the educational sector. Burnett and Patrinos (1997) for example, explained that, changes in the world economy, findings emerging from academic research on economic growth, and returns on investment in education were among many other phenomena that have all influenced much of the impetus for the education reforms taking place today, not only in Sierra Leone but in other African countries as well.

The education reforms that were introduced have been aligned with neo-liberal idea (see Chapter 5 for a detailed analysis of neo-liberalism) in which education is now constituted as a new service sector and market for private investment. Education has now become a product to be bought and sold by academic institutions that have transformed themselves into business (Nguyen, 2009). Students are seen as consumers and education as a product (Johnstone, 2003). According to Slaughter & Leslie (1997), learning institutions adopt

commercial models of knowledge, skills, curriculum, finance, accounting, and management viewed within the wider neo-liberal strategies for reshaping the education sector in the image of a marketplace.

This study agrees with Apple et al. (2008) that the commodification of education represents a significant erosion of education as constituting a public good and public sector. Therefore, the main objective here is to set out the neo-liberal education policies and then to explain what their proponents said they were about and what they would achieve. In Chapter 11, the study will evaluate these claims and their effects on human security from a critical theory critique of neo-liberalism.

8.2 Education Policies After the Civil Conflict in 2002

The Government of Sierra Leone, as reflected in most of the education policy documents, has prioritised education as one of the key drivers of economic growth since the end of the 11 years civil war in 2002. In its recent development plan, Agenda for Prosperity 2013-2018 it states that:

“Prosperity for Sierra Leoneans will be measured by the levels of access to reasonable health care; high quality education; and equal opportunities for all, regardless of age, gender, religion and tribe, and with special attention to the needs of the disabled and vulnerable. Thus, improvements in the quality of life for ordinary citizens will be reflected in incremental changes in the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). Education, as a transformative factor requires that the country improves basic, secondary, technical and tertiary education systems, with wide access across the population and especially for girls, to better meet the needs of society, and of growing investment opportunities.”

The Government and its international partners recognise that excessively centralised government, booming corruption, and the predominance of rent-seeking activities are significant factors which undermine growth and development, resulting in a worsening of poverty and human security in the country. It therefore adopted policies, associated with neo-liberal ideology, to improve governance and to address the urgent need to re-establish trustworthiness as the war ended and the peace process commenced. Hence, decentralisation, which is, the devolution of central government services and the re-establishment of local government; privatisation and the control of Government’s budget allocation to education are among the key political and administrative reforms of recent years. The focus, it was

claimed, is to improve the management of public resources in order to provide basic services, to meet the emerging needs in the job market, and improvements in human development indicators for its citizens (IDA & IMF, 2002:13). The key elements of the overall governance program according to the IDA & IMF were as follows:

- (i) Reactivation of Local Government administration and decentralisation of central government functions through the restoration of paramount chiefs and the conducting of democratic elections in vacant chiefdoms and district councils;
- (ii) Raising of awareness among the civil populace of their rights, privileges, and obligations, and enhancement of the role of the media through improved information and communication infrastructure;
- (iii) Public sector reform and capacity building for efficient and effective services delivery through the re-organising and downsizing of the civil service and enhancement of economic management capacity;
- (iv) Reinforcement of the judiciary and legal system to safe guard the rule of law and human rights;
- (v) Restructuring of the military and the police;
- (vi) Enhancement of accountability in the use of public funds; and strengthened capacity of the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Source: also see http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/print_sl_csp_en.pdf, Thomson, 2007)

The Government's commitment to providing quality basic education for all is enshrined in the Constitution. However, the guiding framework of the education sector is largely defined by two key pieces of legislation: the Education Act (2004) and the Local Government Act (2004). The former sets out the vision, objectives, structure, and organisation of the entire education sector. It summarises the practice of management and control of education and concisely articulates the responsibility of several actors in the education system. The latter was considered important for education because it transferred the management and supervision of basic education to the local councils. The sub-sections that follow provide a brief account of the Education and Local Government Act of 2004, and other policies that were developed since the end of the conflict.

8.2.1 The Education Act of 2004

According to the Ministry of Education, the Education Act of 2004 replaces the Education Act of 1964 and represents the key legislation guiding education in Sierra Leone. It defines

the composition of the entire education system from pre-primary to tertiary level including education for girls and women as well as special needs education. The Act concentrates to a great extent on the administration, control and the role of numerous actors in the sector including local authorities. It states that further roles will be clarified as powers are devolved to local authorities and school management committees during the decentralisation process (Sierra Leone Education Act, 2004). Major points covered are the legalisation of the 6-3-3-4 education system, and the free and compulsory basic education. It states that the ultimate authority for management and control of schools lies with the Minister of Education, but School Management Committees (SMCs) and Boards of Governors will manage primary and secondary schools respectively. The Act clearly stipulate that, while local authorities are recognised, the existence of education committees within local councils is dependent on approval of the Minister. The Act also induces imperative financial obligations on government for adequate provision of teaching and learning materials as well as expansion of the education infrastructure especially for pre-school (which had always been completely supported by the private sector). As will be shown later in the study, because of restrictions on expenditures on education, the government failed to commit to such financial obligations. According to a draft PRSP document on the Education Sector Review of 2004, the adult illiteracy rate stood at over 60% of the population.

8.2.2 The Local Government Act of 2004

The Act re-established local councils and marked the return to decentralisation in education after more than three decades of centralised governance. It devolved the administration and control of basic education from central to local government. The policy incorporated the private enterprise in education, implying that decentralisation involves the “transfer of decision-making, authority, responsibility, and tasks from higher to lower organisational levels or between organisations” (Hanson, 1998: 111-28). It referred to devolution of the centralised control of power and decision-making from government to private enterprises at state/provincial, local government and school levels (Bray, 1985; Naidoo, 2005). Although a laid-back approach is usually not outright, government participation in provision, financing, and regulation of education is minimal. Decentralisation also involves making minimum requirements for private participation in the provision of education (Babalola & Adediji, 2007:161).

Astiz et. al. (2002:70) claims that, this can take several forms and includes the transfer of power from the centre of government to a lower, often local level. They argue that it may be

defined in terms of its form (e.g. functional activities such as administrative, fiscal, market and political dimensions), its level (e.g. national to regional or provincial or local), and the degree of power that is transferred. The degree of power that is transferred, according to Naidoo (2002), ranges on a continuum from de-concentration (the lowest level of autonomy where there is no independent authority from the centre but administrative tasks are shifted to a lower level) to delegation (the mid-range where there is some independent authority, especially related to fiscal matters), to devolution (the highest level where local authorities have independent decision-making authority most frequently found in political and market decentralisation).

The local councils' main functions in Sierra Leone are to manage and control schools (in district, town and city) from pre-primary to JSS levels; to manage and control other government and government-assisted schools (primary to JSS); to provide school supervision, and to manage and control government libraries (World Bank Report, 2007). They will have the biggest influence on education in Sierra Leone. according to MEST-SL (2007), the District Education Councils (DEC) and City/Town Councils would take full control and supervision of all pre-primary, primary, and JSS by 2008, including such functions as the recruitment and payment of teachers, the provision of textbooks and teaching materials, and the rehabilitation and construction of schools. A summary of the decentralisation and devolution policy related to education is provided below and it states that the Government shall:

- a) Continue to support the devolution of functions to Local Councils as per the Local Government Act of 2004.
- b) Continue to strengthen the decentralised system of management and supervision under the Inspectorate Directorate in the District Education Offices.
- c) Ensure strong accountability and reporting systems are developed and implemented across the various levels of decentralisation and devolution.

However, because of the failure of the government to devolve all functions to local councils, a National Decentralisation Strategy in 2010 was developed to provide a new motivation to the decentralisation process across all sectors. A very ambitious target was set in this strategy for the completion of the full transfer of functions from the central to local governments by the end of 2012. Two critical steps were outlined for this: the harmonisation of sectorial policies with the decentralisation policy, and the development by each devolving MDA of a Strategy and Action Plan to guide devolution in their sector (National Decentralisation Strategy, 2010). It was argued that this would allow the MEST-SL to take stock of the

existing progress towards decentralisation in the education sector, identify the challenges and obstacles, and develop appropriate ways forward.

8.2.3 The Education Sector Plan (ESP) of 2007

Since 2007, the main instrument guiding interventions in the education sector have been the Education Sector Plan. The Plan focuses primarily on the policies, strategies and activities needed to provide basic education of quality and marketable skills for all Sierra Leoneans. Although it highlighted the importance of relevant tertiary education to ensure the long-term advancement of society and poverty reduction via relevant education programmes, formal and non-formal, its main aim was to examine the quality of education, financial and human resources to ensure commitments to the external aspirations of EFAs, MDGs and the country-owned PRSP. These challenges largely revolve around the issues of equity, quality, access, gender related issues and HIV/AIDS (ESP, 2007). The document sets out nine critical strategic goals to achieve this and benchmarks for measuring progress. Each goal is broken down into a number of specific objectives which are also used to measure progress in the education sector. The goals are as follows:

1. Achieving UPE, increasing the completion rate and provision of quality education.
2. Expanding and improving post-primary schooling.
3. Providing more and improved literacy and skills training possibilities.
4. Meeting the teachers' needs of an expanding schooling system.
5. Meeting the human resources needs through higher/tertiary education.
6. Providing improved governance, planning and management.
7. Providing pre-school opportunities for more children.
8. Monitoring for quality improvement and accountability.
9. Financing and fiscal sustainability of proposals

Source: Also see Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan (2011)

Another reason for the ESP was to adapt the education development strategy to improve the quality of basic education in order to significantly decrease the illiteracy rate, with particular thought being given to reducing female illiteracy.

8.2.4 The Government White Paper on Education in 2010

More recently, as part of the "Agenda for Change Policy Document", His Excellency the President, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, commissioned an investigation into the poor performance of pupils in both public and private schools in the 2008 BECE and WASSSCE examination.

A White Paper on the Gbamanja Report (2010), stating the position of the Government on the recommendations of the commission, influenced the development of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2010, as well as specific sub-sector policies. The aim was to address the core education priorities of government, by ensuring the right of all children to gain access to the opportunities and environments required to meet their basic learning needs, as reflected in the national constitution of 1991 (NEP, 2010). Other reason for the development of NEP White Paper was to enable the Government to meet the objectives of education in Sierra Leone. These objectives are to develop citizens, who will contribute in building a cohesive, healthy and a strong nation, free and democratic, harmonious, moral and disciplined society. On the issue of Non-Formal Education, it was stated in the NEP White Paper that, to improve access and maintain sustained learning outcomes in particular, adult education and literacy, apprenticeships and skills training, and community education should be given priority.

The NEP White Paper has important implications for the education sector priorities and objectives. It also seeks to provide a sound basis for directing the implementation of the new national system of education, the 6–3–4–4 instead of the 6-3-3-4. This extends secondary education by one year. Another change is the inclusion of compulsory pre-school for children aged 3-5. It is hoped that this modified system will result in the provision of equal access and opportunities for all children and young people. A summary of these reforms is given below:

- Developing a broad-based education system. This emphasises the Government's commitment to improving the current education system, and also to pay the examination fees for all candidates in government-assisted schools who take the externally moderated examinations.
- Providing increased access to basic education for all citizens. The Government stated its commitment to ensuring that the right to basic education should be available to all Sierra Leoneans and should be exercised by all. This will be implemented through a number of non-formal and adult education programmes and projects, including the Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) Project, the Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools (CREPS) Project, and the Illiteracy Eradication (IE) Project. Universal Primary Education (UPE) is partly dependent upon access to schools, which need to be within a reasonable distance of the catchment areas (MEST-SL). Furthermore, schools need to meet basic standards in structure, equipment and sanitation facilities. The target groups of these projects are out-of-

school children, youths and adults. Provision of education opportunities for girls and women was emphasised, especially for those in educationally marginal areas such as the Northern and Eastern Regions, where positive discriminatory measures in favour of girls' education have been taken.

- Improving the quality and relevance of education. The Government has taken many measures to improve these. One is the revision (and, where necessary) the adoption of new curricula. Others are procuring and distributing teaching and learning materials, including science equipment and laboratory chemicals, and developing infrastructures such as new schools and additional classrooms. The District Inspectorate Division in the Ministry of Education will be strengthened by the recruitment of more staff.
- Upgrading technical and vocational education institutions. Technical and vocational education (TVE) centres have been established nationwide and are meant to target unemployed youths, especially ex-combatants from the civil conflict, which ends in 2002. The demand for TVE can be gauged by the proliferation of TVE centres in the urban areas. Many of these centres, which are privately owned, are providing training opportunities for junior and senior secondary school dropouts. In 2001, the Government established the National Council for Technical, Vocational, and Other Academic Awards (NCTVA), with the main aim of moderating and co-ordinating examinations for these centres, thereby promoting quality of its degree certificates and diplomas awarded.
- Promoting literacy and numeracy in adult and formal education. Government actions in this direction include establishing a National Commission for Basic Education (NCBE) and a Non-Formal Education Council (NFEC) to advise on non-formal education programmes, including their designs, structures, contents, and implementation.
- Reducing poverty through education.
- To provide school fee subsidies for non-private primary schools, this will be paid by the Local Councils into school bank accounts, operated at recognised banking institutions. This is to ensure that tuition fees and other charges are abolished for non-private primary schools and stipulates the fees to be charged in public JSS. The Education Ministry has also offered to provide tuition fees, uniforms, and teaching and learning materials for girls in JSS, according to Ministry-established guidelines.

Source: Sierra Leone Government White Paper on Education, Gbamanja Report (2010)

8.2.5 Other Education Policies

Other policies that were developed during this period were the National Policy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in 2010, and the National Policy for Teacher Training and Development in 2010. They also ensures full participation, collaboration and involvement of internal and external stakeholders including civil society organisations, community-based organisations, teachers, Non-Governmental Organisations, other Government Ministries and professional organisations as well as international partners (Sierra Leone National Education Policy, 2010:5). The Government's Agenda for Change (2008-2012) also known as PRSP I and its Agenda for Prosperity (2013-2018), the PRSP II are both geared towards meeting the emerging needs in the job market, and improvements in human development indicators for its citizens. They also focus on providing equal access and quality to achieve high literacy levels.

8.2.6 The Education Policy on Privatisation

Private institutions have always been a significant part of Sierra Leone's education system. According to Bayliss (2000), privatisation is a term that has been associated with the transfer of assets of ownership from the public to the private sector. Belfield & Levin (2002) explained that, this can take many forms such as an increase in the number of fully privately managed and funded schools, privately managed schools financed by public funds, public schools fully or partially financed by private funds, public schools run as private institutions and which compete for public funds, private courses complementing the education provided in public schools or universities, private contracting of certain services, distance courses and so on. Unlike government/public institutions, private institutions do not receive assistance from public funds. Because they are profit undertakings with the aim of providing quality services. The cost of running such institutions has been transferred to consumers, in this case, parents and students in the form of high fees. The establishment and maintenance of private institutions was guaranteed way back in part 11, section 3 (c) of the Education Act No. 63 of 1964. The policy on private institutions states that the Government shall:

- 1) Continue to encourage the establishment of private institutions of a high quality.
- 2) Develop and enforce minimum standards for the establishment and operation of private pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, and more recently;
- 3) Support the TEC to regulate and accredit private tertiary institutions.

Therefore, a review of all subsequent changes to the education policy has upheld the existence of private institutions as long as no child is discriminated against by them on the

grounds of race, creed or religion (MEST-SL, 2010). The National Education Plan (2010) also endorses the principle of public-private partnership in the provision of education. Although not funded with public funds, private institutions are expected to follow a prescribed national curriculum with specific focus on Sierra Leonean languages, Sierra Leone studies, and life skills subjects (MEST-SL, 2010). The Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone also claimed that, private institutions would be subject to regular and systematic inspection by the Department of Education Inspectorate staff. Pupils in both primary and secondary schools are allowed to take the NPSE, BECE and WASSSCE. The new system stipulates that at least 25% of the teaching staff in a private institution shall be Sierra Leonean (MEST-SL, 2010).

The African Economic Outlook (2011) report indicated that, Sierra Leone lacks a conducive business environment, which constrains private sector development. However, the report claimed that since 2007, the government has put forward several policy-oriented government initiatives to improve the business regulatory environment to address these administrative barriers to investment, aimed at improving the business climate and stimulating new investments. These reforms represented the consolidation of the privatisation policy in the country. For example in 2009, the government launched the Private Sector Development Strategy, which seeks to unleash the potential of business enterprises to take advantage of investment opportunities. The notable presence of the private sector in a one-day forum during the Consultative Group meeting in London in November 2009 was a good indicator in that regard (African Economic Outlook, 2011). The president, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma said that:

“My Government is convinced that greater private sector participation in the economy will raise productivity and employment in all productive sectors. To encourage increased private sector participation, we will endeavour to remove barriers to investment through improving the physical infrastructure, strengthening the legal and regulatory framework, promoting business support services and improving access to finance, especially for Small and Medium Enterprises.” (Sierra Leone Agenda for Change, 2008-2012)

In 2010, parliament passed the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) law to encourage private sector participation in the delivery of public services and the implementation of major infrastructure projects. The Government argued that the devastated state of the country's infrastructure and services was well beyond the resources of the public sector to repair alone

(African Economic Outlook, 2011). In 2011, the African Economic Outlook also reported that the Government agreed to invest in a domestic private sector driven Venture Capital Fund (VCF) that was established to provide venture finance to small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Sierra Leone. The Fund has many objectives with the most important being to promote the growth of SMEs to levels that will enable them to compete internationally. However, it was noted that for SMEs to function properly, the constraints of access and cost of credit have to be addressed first (African Economic Outlook, 2011).

8.2.7 The Education Policy on Financing

The Sierra Leone Government's policy on financing education states that, the Government shall:

- i. Continue to finance education at all levels and advocate for more active financial participation by the private sector, civil society, religious organisations, communities, and donor organisations.
- ii. Ensure that the budget allocation for each sector of education shall respond to the specific needs and constraints of women and girls.
- iii. Hold each head of institution and management body accountable for the financial management.
- iv. Ensure that resources are well used and accountability systems are in place and working.
- v. Ensure that school fees subsidies paid to pre-primary and primary schools shall be utilised in accordance with guidelines set by MEST.

Source: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology Sierra Leone.

8.3 Conflict Between the Education & Local Government Acts of 2004

One of the challenges highlighted by the recent Country Sector Report (CSR) in 2010 on education is that, there are ambiguities in the laws, in particular, between the Education and the Local Government Acts. This has led to some tension about the responsibilities of the central and local government, concerning the administration of education in the country. The report indicated that the functions of the Ministry of Education, local governments, school management committees, boards of governors, school proprietors are still not clearly set out in policy documents.

Another major challenge, noted by CSR (2010), is the effective translation of policy into practice. The report recognised the fact that an expanding range of education policies, plans

and strategies have been developed within the sector and its constituent sub-sectors in recent years. However, it observed that there is a lack of potential for enhanced coordination and coherence in the pursuit of agreed objectives.

According to the Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy (CDS) Report in 2011, the development, circulation and discussion of these documents has remained within very limited circles, with many key stakeholders having only had minimal access to them. This highlighted a widespread lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of the content, context and inter-linkages of the various education sector policies and strategies among staff and stakeholders within the Ministry of Education, and especially at district and school levels. This, the report observes, has inevitably resulted in the poor integration and implementation of policies and inconsistent coordination across the sector.

The CDS Report in 2011 further indicated that, difficulties in policy integration and implementation have also been greatly exacerbated by weaknesses in the policy development process. It was noted that there is not enough evidence in the sector and insufficient use of what limited evidence there is available, to influence policy and planning. This, it said, has created a disjuncture between policy contexts, approaches, objectives and timelines, and the realities and possibilities on the ground (Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy Report, 2011).

Nevertheless, capacity development has been consistently identified in every education policy document in Sierra Leone, as one of the most critical factors for the progress of the sector towards effective programme implementation and the achievement of defined targets (Sierra Leone Capacity Development Strategy Report, 2011:1). The Capacity Development Strategy set out specific priorities and goals for the education sector, and therefore underpins the development and implementation of all other legislation, policies, strategies, plans and programmes in both the education sector as a whole and its constituent sub-sectors.

8.4 What do Proponents of Neo-liberal Education Policies Say it Would Achieve?

This section examines the claims made by the proponents of neo-liberal education policies, to understand what they have suggested it would achieve. According to Burnett & Patrinos (1997), a more market-oriented world economy has encouraged initiatives aimed at creating a business environment for the provision of education. This section focuses on three themes, taken from the policy documents that were discussed above, namely privatisation, decentralisation and restriction on budget allocation for education. The sub-sections that

follow will examine the claims made by proponents of neo-liberal education policies within these three themes.

8.4.1 On Privatisation

The World Bank promotes privatisation in developing countries as a policy, primarily, if not exclusively, to reduce poverty through the development of the private sector (Bayliss, 2000). According to John Chubb, the *fait accompli* of private enterprise involvement in education should be utilised to its full potential, in order to reform an educational system paralysed by politics and bogged down by bureaucracy and incapable of innovation (cf. Harvey, 2005:23). Belfield & Levin (2002) argue that this would lead to more resources for the education sector, more efficient use of these resources, more flexibility in education delivery, and an increase in the pool of skilled labour needed for specific economic activities. It focuses on decreasing costs and also pushes for increasing quality and quantity (see Slaughter, 2001; Torres & Rhoades, 2006).

Ross & Gibson (ed., 2007) stated that, the neo-liberal education reforms emphasise the opening up of the education services market, to for-profit education management organisations, and via international trade and investment. The reason for the reforms was because there is questions about government management of responsibilities, usually within the field of public policy. The free market, private enterprise, consumer choice, entrepreneurial initiative, and government deregulation are the fundamental principles leading the attack on public education (Ross & Gibson ed., 2007). Scholars such as Robertson (2000), and Whitty, Power & Halpin (1998) have summed this up as:

“Since the 1980s the world has witnessed the increasing transformation of schools into institutions governed by market principles of accountability, choice, and efficiency.”

They argue that public education alone is insufficient to guarantee access to schooling. For example, the dearth of schools in the communities, congested classes, the lack of good quality instruction, untrained teachers, absence of textbooks and the poor conditions of service for the staff have contributed to the deteriorating level of education in the country. Therefore, demand-driven private schools of all sorts, they argue, normally fill this gap and offer services to households in return for a certain amount of fees and contributions in kind, or free labour (also see Kitaev, 1999) argues that. In doing so, this would bring into the education sector, business management principles that are vital in providing quality services (Lizotte, 2012). Proponents of these reforms claimed that, it would encourage schools to

innovate in order to compete for the business of parents and their children. This would increase competitiveness between different providers of education services. Echoing Whitty et al. (1998:35), “education and welfare services are offered to individual consumers by competing providers rather than provided collectively by the state to all citizens”.

Proponents of neo-liberal education reforms have presented choice as the means of improving education (Whitty et al., 1998). According to Lizotte (2012), it enables parents and students to choose education options that have the most effective way of equitably distributing results. For example, students now choose which schools to attend, although some students have significantly more choice than others (Ross & Gibson ed., 2007). These changes, they argue, reflect policy makers’ greater faith in markets and competition than in teachers and students. They claim that choice-based mechanisms remain primarily as the means of empowerment, which enable students to fulfil their potential.

Private sector managerial mechanisms, proponents argue, are the best enablers of choice. Fliegel & MacGuire (1993:12) claimed that: effective education requires hard work, commitment, focus, and a productive learning environment. These qualities are necessary both for teachers and students. Where a school system is failing, choice, they argue, should set free the hidden positive energy in students and teachers and bring them to bear on the education process. This should eliminate the institutional and social barriers to constructive change, thereby reduce bureaucracy, permit people to concentrate on what is of vital importance to them, and let people teach and learn (Fliegel & MacGuire, 1993).

According to Whitty et al. (1999), proponents argued that, the market approach to education could result in more efficient and more effective schools. As Hursh (2005) noted, “much of the choice/markets agenda has been shaped by the criticisms of public schools as inefficient bureaucracies that are unresponsive either to the community or individuals interests”. He argued that, failing schools are aware, parents cannot take their children elsewhere. Therefore, proponents argued “efficiency and equality in education could only be addressed through ‘choice’ and where family or individuals were constructed as the consumers of education services” (Robertson, 2000:174). This means, expanding the collection of parents’ choice for their children education, and supporting schools based on the number of students that they attract. This would introduce a competitive market-approach to the allocation of resources. Robertson (2000) wrote that markets are:

- More efficient modes for the allocation of goods and services;
- More equitable, in that they are responsive to the needs and desires of their clients, as opposed to public sector bureaucracies characterised by quasi-monopoly status;

- More democratic in that they maximise the freedom of individuals to choose intervention in their own lifestyles, unhindered by the state.

Chubb and Moe (1990), in particular argue that, “turning to the market as an instrument to arbitrate choice will lead to autonomy”. This view was supported by Robertson (2000:138), who stated that, markets promote autonomy by enabling all participants to make decisions for themselves.

8.4.2 On Allocation of Government Budget on Education

According to Hursh (2005), proponents of market reforms assert that schools do not need more money but only need to become more efficient by competing with other public and private schools. While education remains the largest sector in most countries, they argue that an increase in Government spending on education could increase state deficit. Therefore, they claim that, a reduction of Government expenditure will make services more efficient, and also the Government will be able to service its debt. Public services will be contracted out to the private sector.

8.4.3 On Decentralisation

The most important reason for decentralisation is “to increase efficiency in management and governance” (McGinn and Welsh, 1999). They put forward several reasons to explain this. First, they argue that, this often happens when management and bureaucracy at the centre is slow, ineffective and inefficient. For example, where purchasing of equipment and teacher placement takes too long to reach the schools, the very obvious solution to tackle this, they claim, is to decentralise. Second is political democratisation. This is where people, particularly communities are given the opportunity to make decisions about concerns that arise in the course of their daily lives. Third, they argue, this could be to reduce the power of teaching unions and to harness new resources.

The World Bank Report (2000) also put forward several rationales for decentralising the education system. The first is economic, as responsibilities for financing primary and secondary education are shifted to another level apparently to increase efficiency. This, the report claimed creates space for private sector responses unconstrained by the state bureaucracy. The second is political, in that, decentralisation is intended to make government more responsive and accountable to local communities. It also increases democratisation, promoting equality and access, empowering communities, and increasing community participation in schooling (World Bank report, 2000; Naidoo, 2002). The third is,

decentralisation has an educational rationale, that is, to improve service delivery by giving local control over curriculum and teaching methods to local communities, principals and teachers in order to make education more relevant to the local context (also see Naidoo, 2002; Carnoy, 1999).

In supporting the World Bank's report, Astiz et al. (2002:70) also claimed that decentralisation of the education system makes schools or learning institutions more democratic, efficient, and accountable, responsive to the community and to local needs, it empower teachers, parents, and others in the education community while improving the effectiveness of school reform, and being able to improve school quality and increase funds available for teachers' salaries through competition. In particular, as Lizotte (2012) observes, local government is now responsible for the successful execution of social service provision even as the power to determine how these services are to be delivered is retained at higher levels.

8.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has analysed the neo-liberal education policies in Sierra Leone. The aim of introducing these policies it is alleged, is to improve governance and to address the inequitable access to education. These are to be achieved through better management of public resources to provide better education services. The neo-liberal reforms were introduced because the Government, together with its international partners believed that, centralised government, booming corruption, and the predominance of rent-seeking undertakings were significant factors that undermine growth, development and the resulting poverty situation in the country. With these policies, education has been reshaped as a product to be bought and sold by learning institutions. Students are now regarded as consumers and education as a product.

While the chapter has shown various education policy documents that was developed since the end of the conflict, the regulatory framework in the education sector was also revealed to be largely defined by two key pieces of legislation: the Education Act of 2004 and the Local Government Act of 2004. The former sets out the vision, objectives, structure, and organisation of the entire education sector. It outlines the system of administration and control of education and concisely states the responsibilities of the various actors in the education system. The latter transfers the management and supervision of basic education to the local councils. Two significant changes were evident in the recent National Education Plan of 2010. First, the education structure was changed to 6-3-4-4 instead of the 6-3-3-4.

This extended secondary education by one year. Second, the inclusion of compulsory pre-school for children, aged 3-5. However, as the study will show in the evaluation chapters, the education infrastructure was not provided to accommodate these changes, thus making the success of these policies difficult. The chapter illustrates ambiguities between the Education and Local Government Acts of 2004. The lack of effective translation of policy into practice, and the difficulties in policy integration and implementation were some of the problems highlighted.

Finally, the chapter presents the claims made by the proponents of neo-liberal education policies. These claims were presented from three themes taken from the education policy documents, namely: privatisation, cuts in education spending and decentralisation. Proponents believe that, these policies would create choice and competition in the provision of education services. This is expected to improve the quality of services. Furthermore, they were also seen as the most effective means of fairly distributing positive learning outcomes, by creating competence in management and governance, and by promoting equality in access to education. In the next chapter, the study will examine health, the second element of human security that this study focuses upon, from a development perspective in Sierra Leone.

Chapter 9

Health, Development and Human Security in Sierra Leone

9.1 Introduction

This chapter explores health development, a vital component of human security that this study seeks to investigate in Sierra Leone. Its purpose is to place health within a wider human security context. The neo-liberal health policies will be examined in Chapter 10. The chapter seeks to achieve two objectives: first, to understand the evolution of Sierra Leone's health system, examining its policies and structures up until the end of the civil conflict in 2002; and second, to show the relationship between health care delivery and human security as features of nation-state developmental goal. The chapter starts with the evolution of the health system. It then goes on to examine the Government's health policies which are divided into two periods: policies prior to 1992 and thereafter until 2002. The structure of the health system is then presented, and it subsequently goes on to show the relationship between health and human security. The chapter ends with a chapter summary.

9.1.1 Reasons Why Health have Become a Social and Political Issue

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the development of any nation is closely related to the health status of its population. Good health, it is argued, is vital to the well-being of people and in achieving sustained economic and social development. Therefore, the extent to which ill-health can lead to poverty and human insecurity, and the role that improved health can play in reducing poverty remain unquestionable. Bond & Dor (2003) described ill-health and the lack of access to health care as a consequence of poverty. This, they argue, undermines the human security of a population. Access to health care is very important and the improvements in the health status of a population are often at the heart of the concepts of development and human security in particular. This, Willis & Khan (2009) have argued, is viewed as an improvement in an individual's quality and standard of living.

The health concerns of a country have now become a major political and social issue as the Government's policies are seen by citizens as ineffective. In Sierra Leone for example, the quality of health service delivery had deteriorated, due to corruption and the lack of investment in health infrastructure and training qualified staff. The eleven-year civil war further exacerbated this situation. Even after the conflict, evidence suggests that the health sector is still affected by shortage of under-financing. As a result, the Government is unable to provide adequate health care services for its citizens.

Although the right to social security and health is well established in international law, governments and international donors are still failing in their responsibility to guarantee these rights to millions of people (Berhout & Oostingh, 2008). This according to Carr (2004) has led to huge disparities between rich and poor people and between countries. The growing public demand for access to high-quality and affordable health care has further increased the political pressure on governments to make wise policy choices (WHO Report, 2010). An Oxfam International report in 2006 states that, while the aim is to offer access to a sustainable quality of health care for all, the reality for the vast majority of poor people in low-income countries is that, public health services are limited, and in some cases unavailable, or are skewed towards the needs of the rich, or are unaffordable. This has very serious implications when trying to achieve human security.

9.2 An Overview of the Health System in Sierra Leone

This section provides a brief historical account of the health system in Sierra Leone. The history of providing health care services dates back to the arrival of the missionaries and the British in the early part of the 19th century (Dept. of Health Sierra Leone). Since then the health system has been modelled along the lines of its colonial master, Britain. According to Murray & Frenk (in the bulletin of WHO, 2000):

“A health system comprises of all the groups and institutions that provide health care services, regulate and finance health actions right from the household to the national levels. It also includes all the activities whose primary purpose is to promote, maintain, and restore health, responsiveness, and fairness in health resources distribution.”

The overall goal for health care is to provide an fair access to affordable basic services, improving quality of service and restructuring delivery mechanisms, especially for the poor and vulnerable (SLIVS, 2006).

With this definition in mind, the health system in Sierra Leone was primarily based on providing curative rather than preventive health services (MoHS-SL, 2008). Prior to independence, health care was largely delivered in a traditional setting on a fee-for-service basis although some payment was in kind. There were few Sierra Leonean elites and colonial government administrators, who enjoyed the formal health care services provided in hospitals by the colonial government (Akortsu & Abor, 2011). Such historical evidence, according to the World Bank (2003) suggest that, prior to the reform, the most affluent

persons were using public sector providers, not for primary care or consultations, like preventive medical visits, but for costly and highly-complex medical procedures. After independence, the Sierra Leonean government took responsibility for providing health care services to all its citizens.

One significant change that was made by the new administration to the colonial system, according to MoHS-SL (2008), was the expansion of rural health facilities to meet the needs of the predominantly rural population. The MoHS-SL stated that, free health care services were provided to the population through public health institutions with very few private health facilities. There were no out-of-pocket payments in the public health institutions and care was financed exclusively from tax revenues. However, this became unsustainable because of the necessities of other parts of the health system and sectors of the economy. For example, the Government had embarked on huge development ventures in infrastructure and the training of medical staff, so finances were limited, and this meant the Government had to find alternative ways to finance it. One way was by the introduction of user-fees for services in public health institutions.

The health system was also pluralistic. This meant the Government, religious missions, local and international NGOs and even the private (private-for-profit and non-profit) sector including traditional medicine practices were all engaged in providing health care services. It was argued that medical care was delivered to people in the low and medium strata, who were not safeguarded by any kind of government health policy and medical insurance (see also Gaviria et al., 2006). However, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation was responsible for setting policies for the health sector and ensuring the different agencies which provided the services worked within the guidelines and met acceptable minimum standards. It also sought to achieve transparency and accountability by demanding that "all NGOs operating in the health sector to provide annual reports to Government on their activities and financial arrangements" (MoHS-SL, 2002). This, according to the Government, underlined the necessity of developing a legal framework for the health information system. It defined the requirements for private sector reporting of health information and public sector monitoring of private sector establishments (MoHS-SL, 2007). Many of the participants in the interview and focus group discussions confirmed that the private sector satisfied the demand of the high-income population through direct charges to service-users and by means of private health insurance plans.

The management of the health sector is primarily the task of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation at national level and supported by the District Health Management Teams

(DHMT) in the regions. Many citizens consider the development and implementation of health policies as not participatory and inclusive, resulting in inequality and social injustice. Although development of policy is supposed to have adopted a “bottom-up” approach that should include a wide range of actors, with the districts being identified as the main source of policy direction and implementation, Oyaya & Rifkin (2002) argue that in reality, it is a “top-down” planning process where professionals and technocrats decide what is best for those without access to power and resources. They also stated that, at each level of the health system, decision-making, management, and service delivery functions require close interactions between the health sector and health-related stakeholders. The aim is to facilitate better understanding of the planned activities for effective utilisation of resources to attain maximum health outcomes.

9.3 The Government’s Health Policies

The health sector is guided by a National Health Policy and it provides a clear direction for the entire sector, with specific goals, objectives and priorities for investment to maintain and improve the provision of health care in the country (MoHS-SL, 2007). Since independence, a number of health policies have been developed and implemented in Sierra Leone. In this study, they have been divided into two parts, namely: policies prior to and after 1992.

9.3.1 Policies Prior to 1992

Since the 1980s, the National Health Service was primarily structured to focus on the provision and delivering of primary health care (PHC). The main idea of the PHC was more clearly outlined by WHO in the international conference held in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan in 1978 when the organisation redefined health as:

“Health is not just the absence of disease or infirmity but a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. It is a fundamental human right and the attainment of the highest possible level of health is the most important worldwide social goal whose realisation requires action from many other social and economic sectors in addition to the health sector.”

In 2006, WHO defined health as “...a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity”, and state that “The provision of health care should be based on the principle of PHC, which entails universal health care (UHC) access based on need, health equity and social justice, and community participation in defining and implementing health agendas” (cf. Mackintosh & Koivusalo 2005:6).

The PHC's focus according to WHO is mainly on community outreach services such as health promotion, preventative care, whilst also ensuring that quality curative and rehabilitative services are provided. Furthermore, the approach is also based on the recognition that the promotion and protection of health is essential to human welfare and sustained economic and social development (Sambo, 2007). Therefore, health care services are rendered in a manner that takes into account the circumstances in which people live, work and interact (Dept. of Health Policy Paper South Africa, 2011). The implementation of the policy was facilitated by other technical policies such as the immunisation and reproductive health programmes. These policies were aligned with the Government's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP) document before the end of the conflict, including international and regional initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals, Roll Back Malaria, CRC, CEDAW, Cairo Declaration, the Beijing Platform of Action, and NEPAD health objectives (SLIVS, 2007).

Below is a summary of the health policies that were developed prior to 1992 (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>).

1. Public Health Act of 1960
2. National Five Year Development Plan (1974-79)
3. Three Year Public Investment Plan (1980-83)
4. Three Year National Development Plan (1983-86)
5. Sierra Leone Program for Rehabilitation and Development (1985-88)
6. The Sierra Leone Constitution (1991)

A Joint Government\UNDP\WHO Report on the Health Sector of 1991, and various other studies had noted that, public perception was that the health system was unsatisfactory, and incapable of addressing the nation's health problems. This led to a severe erosion of public confidence in it. The complete under-utilisation of Government amenities and services has influenced an increasing trend of self-medication and the use of other care such as traditional medicine and herbalists.

Following the Alma Ata Declaration in 1978, to which Sierra Leone was a signatory, the country's Health Department started looking at ways to implement the basic PHC (<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). The process it was argued involved a sector review in 1981, followed by the establishment of a National Steering Committee in 1984. This body organised series of workshops in 1984 and 1985 involving District and Provincial health teams. The National Operational Handbook for Primary Health Care in 1990 was the eventual outcome of this exercise (Dept. of Health,

1991; also see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). The main objective of the handbook according to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation Sierra Leone was “to standardise the PHC approach in the country, in such a way that, all activities are synchronised to produce optimum results. It represented a guide not only for the Department of Health personnel but also for all agencies involved in the health sector”.

9.3.2 Policies After 1992 and Up Until 2002

In September 1992, Sierra Leone embarked on a major reform of its health sector. The reform had three broad objectives according to the Department of Health: first, to make a realistic assessment of its health care delivery system; second, to develop a sector policy that would set out long-term and short-term goals and objectives; and third, to develop an action plan that would map out specific pathways through which the policy objectives could be achieved (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). Central to the reform process was stakeholder participation by both providers and consumers. However, the document that emerged was based on an economic development package directed by international institutions including the World Bank and the IMF, with minimal sectorial input at the preparatory stage. This resulted in the National Health Policy of Sierra Leone in 1993. It consisted of two parts (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). The first carried out a situation analysis, which covered prevailing conditions in the sector and their causes. The second focused on the health policy document under the broad heading “Policy”, which examined each of the areas in the first part and set out broad goals and priorities for reform.

This investigation eventually yielded the National Health Action Plan (NHAP) in 1994, and delivered a five-year program to realise agreed-upon health goals. The development of the NHAP showed that, the current level of financial support from Government and other sources were inadequate for complete programme execution. This gap in available resources led to a decision to rank interventions in order of priority, and developed a subset of core programmes to be implemented first (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). This priority-setting exercise, it was argued, was expected to have a significant effect on the reform process in order to improve human security. The five priority interventions were:

1. Improvement in maternal and child health.

2. Prevention and control of communicable diseases.
3. Nutrition.
4. Improvement in water and sanitation.
5. Health information, education and communication.

In order to improve health service delivery and accountability, the following issues were identified for immediate action (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>):

- a) Strengthening and expansion of PHUs.
- b) Community involvement in health service planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- c) Decentralisation of operational management and budgetary control.
- d) Improved revenue collection from drug distribution and user-fees development of the health policy and action plan.

The policy-making body of Government, after extensive debate and input, finally adopted the NHAP as a blueprint for the health sector. Once this document was adopted, work started in creating an enabling environment for its implementation through (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>):

1. Enhancement of the legislative framework.
2. Manpower and institutional changes.
3. Changes in financial management and budget allocation.

The NHAP called for radical changes in this system, for example the decentralisation of decision-making including budgetary control to district level.

9.4 The Private Sector's Involvement in Providing Health Care

The private sector's involvement in health care delivery had largely been on an ad hoc basis, with individuals or small groups providing private medical consultations or facilities for in-patient care (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). The level of interaction between these providers and the Government, it was argued, had been purely regulatory, rather than as a team with a common overall objective. It was in 1994, for the first time, that representatives of the private sector became involved in the planning and development process leading to the formulation of the NHAP (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). The Government was also able to permit a long-term agreement to one private organisation to develop and use one of its hospitals for the delivery of better-quality tertiary care. This agreement was considered a significant first

step in improving government-private sector co-operation, which was expected to trigger more interest in private institutions being involved in health care provision (see <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2012/10/RP133.pdf>). This move, the Government argues, allowed it to transfer resources formerly assigned for the construction of a new tertiary care hospital to other programs in the NHAP. More on the private sector will be discussed in the next chapter.

9.5 The Structure of the Health System

The public health delivery system consists of three different levels (see Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015:4). The Peripheral Health Units (PHUs), which consist of community health centres (CHCs), community health posts (CHPs), and maternal and child health posts (MCHPs) provide front line primary health care. The District Hospitals (DH) provides secondary care and the Regional/National Hospitals are responsible for tertiary care. The district health services form the core component of primary health care. They consist of a network of PHUs, the DHs and the District Health Medical Team (DHMT). The PHUs are the first line of health services for people, and are further sub-divided into three levels. The first is the MCHPs. These are situated in villages with populations of less than 5000. They are staffed by Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Aides, who are trained to provide numerous services such as antenatal care, supervised deliveries, postnatal care, family planning, growth monitoring and promotion for under-five children, immunisation, health education, management of minor ailments, and referral of cases to the next level (see Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015:4). This study notes that, given the fact that MCH Aides have very little education and training, and their posts demand great responsibility, it was evident that they do not have the required skills to carry out these tasks, even though they are supported by community health workers (TBAs and Community volunteers).

The second is CHPs. They are located in small towns with populations between 5,000 and 10,000 and are staffed by State Enrolled Community Health Nurses (SECHNs) and MCH Aides (see Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015:4). They provide the same type of services that are provided by the MCHPs but also have additional responsibilities which include prevention and control of communicable diseases and rehabilitation.

The third level covers more complicated cases, which are referred to CHCs. These are located at Chiefdom level, usually covering a population ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 and

staffed with a Community Health Officer (CHO), SECHN, MCH Aides, an epidemiological disease control assistant and an environmental health assistant (see Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015:4). They provide all the services provided at the CHPs level in addition to environmental sanitation and supervise the CHPs and MCHPs within the Chiefdom.

The District Hospitals are secondary level facilities providing back-support for the PHUs. They provide the following services: out-patient services for referred cases from PHUs, and for population living within their immediate environs, inpatient and diagnostic services, management of accidents and emergencies, and technical support to PHUs (see Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015:4). According to the Sierra Leone National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2010-2015:4), the DHMT is responsible for the overall planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the district health services under the leadership of the District Medical Officer (DMO). Other members include the Medical Officer in charge of the District Hospital and scheduled officers for various programs and units.

9.6 The Relationship Between Health and Human Security

In this section, the study illustrates the link between health care and human security. Health care can be used as an indicator to measure human security of a country. As Chen & Narasimhan (2003:184) have argued, both national and global health issues and terms such as human security are now widely used by policy-makers. This is because of the unequal access to health care services and its effects on humanity. They argued that some aspects of health are intrinsically linked to security. The daily threats to a person's health, according to Periago (2012), are disease pandemics, deficient water and sanitation systems, natural and man-made disasters, inadequate attention to maternal and child health, unemployment, violence, and unsafe roads and transportation systems. The WHO (2003) observes that, premature and unnecessary loss of life is perhaps the greatest insecurity of human life. It states that of the planet's six billion people, about 56 million die annually, and many prematurely.

Sierra Leone in comparison with the rest of the world has one of the worst UNDP health indicators. According to Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS) conducted in 2008, life expectancy stands at 47 years, with an infant mortality rate at 89 per 1,000 live births, an under-five mortality rate of 140 per 1,000 live births and a maternal mortality ratio of 857 per 100,000 births. The majority of the causes of illness and death in Sierra Leone

are preventable, with most deaths attributable to nutritional deficiencies, pneumonia, anaemia, malaria, tuberculosis and now HIV/AIDS (SLDHS, 2008) and the Ebola Virus Disease. The view that the majority of causes of morbidity and mortality in Sierra Leone are preventable was also supported by the Sierra Leone Global Health Initiative Strategy compiled in 2011, which has had a significant effect in achieving the goal of human security. According to WHO, depending upon the assumptions employed, about one-third of these deaths are preventable or curable with existing knowledge, technologies and resources. This information made Chen & Narasimhan (2003) believe that, the objective of national and global health is to prevent and treat these unnecessary health insecurities. This, they argued, places health in the mainstream of human security because of its focus on people.

Good health is seen as the key to reducing poverty. The hospitals and health facilities can achieve this goal if they are well financed (Akortsu & Abor 2011). This would enable them to develop the health infrastructure, train and recruit staff to the level required to deliver excellent health care services. According to Periago (2012), poverty represents a great threat to human health, and is a major component of human insecurity. The health insecurities of a country could shed light on the degree of health obstacles which the population encounter. This would provide a better knowledge of the socio-economic development of that country. The accessibility and affordability of health services enable people and is a prerequisite to achieve their human security. The two, therefore, have an emancipatory intent.

The connection between poverty, health, and insecurity was highlighted by the series of “Voices of the Poor” studies, produced by the World Bank for its World Development Report in 2000. It shows the vast numbers of the world’s poor and the severity of their multiple deprivations. The toll of these insecurities, the report noted, far surpasses the suffering and death due to either conflict or infectious epidemics. The study revealed that, the poor did not only fear violence from crime and the loss of wages and jobs, but also severe illness worries them because they cannot afford to pay for treatment or care, particularly if the patient is also the main breadwinner. Human security is concerned with protecting and empowering these people through an alternative mode of providing health care. Sometimes, such expenditures precipitate a vicious cycle of illness, asset depletion and impoverishment. Such health issues affecting the lives of ordinary people, for example the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone and other countries in West Africa, exposes the inability of the Government to provide basic health services.

Access to health care and improvements in the health status of a population are often at the heart of the concepts of ‘development’ and ‘human security’. Willis & Khan (2009) viewed

this as a progress in an individual's quality of life and standard of living, and hence their human security. For example, life expectancy at birth is used as a measure of the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) included a number of health-related targets to be achieved. Sen (1995) stated that, a nation in which its citizens are healthy, is a sign of well-being and a good summary indication of human development and the advancement of human security. Sen argues that individuals would have a greater ability to participate in work activities (both paid and unpaid) and in education, which increases their life chances, choices and their human security. Health development, a practice of continued progress in health status, should thus be, a central objective of development policy. As Sen observes, it should be a route to greater freedoms and therefore 'development'.

According to Nunes (2009), health is a form of human capital and can be defined by longevity and physical well-being that people attain. He argued that, social policy decisions require an understanding of the factors that contribute to the creation of health inequalities. Similarly, as a component of human capital, Cornia & Mwabu (1997) stated that, health is also a key factor in the creation of wealth. They illustrated the close connection between health and wealth presented in a paper by Pritchett & Summers in 1996. They explored a causal relationship between the two phenomena and concluded that wealthier nations are healthier nations. Wealthier nations are in a stronger position to provide better health to their population. Nunes (2009) notes that, better health in turn increases labour productivity, thereby enhancing wealth which improves human security.

Health has increasingly been linked to the notion of being a basic human right, which is, the right to health care (Gruskin & Braveman, 2006). This is a view that is also shared by the idea of human security. The human right aspect of health and the provision of health care is evident in some international covenants and declarations. For instance, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1976), article 12 stated that, "everyone has a right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health". In this covenant, there are several other health-related rights regarding workplace, living conditions and food production. According to Gostin et al. (2003), over the years, the ICESCR has been widely ratified by governments globally. They also stated that, other health-related problems that affect specific groups of people, for example women, children, and the elderly are also recognised in other international declarations and treaties. All countries in the world, it was noted, today participate in at least one human rights treaty which includes health-related human rights. Each country is therefore, legally responsible

under international law for human rights of their citizens as they relate to health (Gruskin & Tarantola, 2005a).

Beyond being a right issue, health is also considered as something of great value to people. Ruthjersen (2007) described health as a fundamental social and human value, and that good health is a pre-requisite for human development and prosperous economies (also see Schrader, 2005). There is no doubt that being in good health is vital in achieving one's goal, and increasing one's opportunities in life (Barry, 2005). Health is also important in its own right and for its own sake (Power & Faden, 2006). Linking health to a state of human well-being, the WHO Ottawa Charter in 1986 notes that to reach a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realise aspirations to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment (cf. Ruthjersen, 2007). Health is therefore seen as a resource of everyday living, and not the objective to living. Additionally, the WHO Ottawa Charter in 1986 also stresses that the basic requirement for good health are peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable eco-system, sustainable resources, social justice and equity. From a general point of view, good health includes experiences of happiness, satisfaction, pleasure, recognising one's abilities and reaching one's ideals during a lifespan, being able to adjust to challenges and changes in both the domestic and foreign environment, and not simply the absence of diseases (see Brunner & Marmot 1999:17; Pender, Murdaugh & Parsons 2006:22-23).

9.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented health within the wider context of human security. It has shown that, the development of any nation is closely related to the health status of its population, and ill-health is one factor that can undermine human security. It also shows the evolution of the health system in Sierra Leone and how it was structured along the British health system. Prior to independence, health care was largely delivered in a traditional environment on a fee-for-service basis although some of the payment was made in kind. There were few Sierra Leonean elites and colonial government administrators who enjoyed the formal health care services provided in hospitals by the colonial Government.

The chapter also shows that, prior to the reforms that took place, the most well-to-do persons were using public sector providers, not only for primary care or discussions, like pre-emptive medical visits, but also for expensive and highly-complex medical techniques. The changes that were made when the new administration took over after independence were extending health facilities to the predominantly rural population in order to meet their needs. Although,

many other policy documents have been developed to transform the health sector, its delivery was mainly guided by the Public Health Act of 1960 and the National Health Policy of 1993. The health system was structured to provide three levels of health care. First, primary care to provide front line primary health care by PHUs. Second, secondary care to provide back-up for the PHUs in District Hospitals. Third, Regional/National Hospitals to provide tertiary care. The chapter also shows that, the provision of good health care is essential to the improvement of human security as it aim to emancipate people from those conditions that affect their well-being. In the next chapter, the study will examine the neo-liberal health policies, in order to set out the claims made by their proponents, and to show what they said, the reforms would achieve.

Chapter 10

Neo-liberal Health Reforms in Sierra Leone

“Good quality and well developed health and sanitation services are essential if Sierra Leone is to develop and prosper.”

(World Vision, Budget Advocacy Network, Save the Children & Oxfam Report, 2012).

“For every \$1 invested in sanitation, on average \$9 is returned in increased productivity.”

(Hutton, Bartram & Haller, WHO 2007).

10.1 Introduction

The above statements show the important contribution that health security can make to a country. The main objectives of this chapter are to achieve the following, to:

- Set out the major neo-liberal reforms to health care in Sierra Leone after the war in their own terms, and to;
- Examine and set out the claims made by proponents of the reforms, for example the national government and international organisations such as the IMF and the World Bank, who introduced them, and what they said the reforms would achieve.

The effects of these policies in reaching the goal of human security will be critically evaluated in Chapter 12, from a critical theory perspective. This chapter is important because it provides the lens, through which the neo-liberal claims will be evaluated. It is organised as follows: it starts by outlining the reasons why the reforms were introduced, and then goes on to discuss the neo-liberal health care policies after the war. Before setting out the claims made by proponents of the reforms and what they said it would achieve. It concludes with a summary.

10.2 Reasons for the Introduction of the Reforms

According to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone, the overall goal of the national health system is to deliver better quality and equal access to essential health care which should be affordable by all, especially the poor and most vulnerable people. However, the policies that were developed and implemented both before, during and after the conflict, had failed to attain this objective.

Other commentators have questioned the imposition of the neo-liberal health policies in post-conflict countries. According to Macrae et al. (1995), the need for reform, defined in terms of the severity of health problems or the dysfunctionality of the health system, is, on

its own, a poor indicator of the potential for implementing the reforms. They argued that, a country emerging from civil war may lack human resources and the institutional capacity to design and implement effective health policies. Therefore, evolving from conflict presents both particular constraints and opportunities for reforms. The Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2008 reported that:

“While Sierra Leone’s devastating 11-year civil war ended over a decade ago, the country’s health care system, largely destroyed during the conflict along with much of the rest of the nation’s vital infrastructure, remains extremely weak and the health situation extremely dire. The nation continues to struggle with a low life expectancy of 47 years; an infant mortality rate of 89 per 1,000 live births; an under-five mortality rate of 140 per 1,000 live births; and a maternal mortality rate of 857 per 100,000 births.”

This shows the very huge challenge that the Government faces in delivering health care services. The following reasons illustrates why the reforms needed to be introduced.

- Access to and the quality of health care provided is still a major problem affecting the lives of many Sierra Leoneans and hence their human security. According to Cassels (1995), this is believed to have resulted from a variety of factors such as an individual’s poverty, geographical location, age, sex, lack of employment, unavailability of services to treat particular problems (such as sexually transmitted diseases) and bad planning and management of services.
- The civil war also played a part in disrupting the health care system. This has caused severe damage to the physical infrastructure, loss of skilled professionals because of it wider economic effects, and a reduction in the resources available to the health sector
http://www.aho.afro.who.int/profiles_information/index.php/Sierra_Leone:Foreword). This, the African Health Observatory argues, has resulted in changes in population patterns, and specific health related problems ranging from mental trauma to physical disability.
- According to the African Health Observatory, there are wider changes that many countries in sub-Saharan Africa are facing that have implications for health policy. These include changing patterns of disease distribution such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, the escalation of TB and malaria, the recent Ebola Virus Disease as well as the more general problems associated with the epidemiological and demographic transition. Another important aspect noted by the African Health Observatory is the

inadequate institutional and organisational capacity to effectively respond to the existing and emerging health challenges.

- The health system in Sierra Leone is faced with a situation where the resources provided to the health sector do not match the demand to provide good quality health care services (SLIVS, 2007). One key factor that explains this is the authoritarian nature of the state before the civil conflict, which uses corruption, patrimonialism, kleptocracy and so on as a practice to enrich political elites and their cohorts (see chapter 4 for detailed analysis). Cassels (1995) argued that, scarce resources are used inefficiently and the state health care provision is not efficient. The limited public funds available are being spent on wrong and cost-unproductive services, and on tertiary instead of primary levels of care. Existing services, Cassels claims, are badly managed, money does not get to where it is needed, and it is difficult to monitor how such monies are spent. It was argued that this system of purchasing goods and services therefore fails to ensure value for money.
- According to the Sierra Leone Basic Package of Essential Health Services (BPEHS-SL) prepared in 2010, it stated that the health system is fragmented by vertical programmes and global initiatives. It recognises that it does not have the ability to deliver services to the entire population alone, thus necessitating the need to involve other actors such as private providers and NGOs (BPEHS-SL, 2010).
- Services do not respond to what people want. The quality of service is poor, and people are faced with unmotivated and poorly trained staff, long waiting times, and inconvenient clinic hours, inadequate supplies of drugs and lack of any confidentiality or privacy (BPEHS-SL, 2010).
- The inability of the Sierra Leone Government to provide sufficient funding, particularly with in the context of SAPs or the more recent PRSPs (HDR, 2003).
- The growing discourse of patients as consumers, connected to neo-liberal thoughts around individualisation and the significance of personal choice in letting people to develop their own life chances, has led to a conviction in the market as an unbiased and efficient example of service provision

The eventual outcome of the above problems was reflected in the UNDP health indicators, where Sierra Leone was ranked the worst compared with the rest of the world in 2005 and 2006. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation also state that, the decreasing quality in the provision of health care and the growing users' discontent in its delivery have demanded the necessity for reforms in the health sector. The aim is to ensure equal access, and to improve

the quality and efficiency of the system. Therefore, reforming the health care system became a priority for the Government and other actors working in the sector. Cassels (1995) stated that, the purpose of the change is to promote the achievement of overall health policy objectives. He argues that, without institutional or structural change, it is likely that existing organisational structures and management systems will continue to fail in dealing adequately with the problems listed above.

Oyaya & Rifkin (2003) argued that health sector reforms are set against a backdrop of complex epidemiological, social, economic, and political factors that pose equally complex problems in terms of health needs and services. The World Health Organisation (1995) defined health sector reform as “a sustained process of fundamental change in policy and institutional arrangements guided by the Government, designed to improve the functioning and performance of the health sector and ultimately the health status of the population”. In this context, as Janovsky stated (in WHO, 1995), health sector reform involves defining priorities, refining policies and reforming the institutions in consensus with all actors to improve the health status of the population. In the next section, the study will now examine the health policies that were introduced after the conflict.

10.3 The Health Care Policies After the Civil Conflict in 2002

Since the end of the war, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone have developed various health policy documents to address the above problems, namely:

- National Health Policy 2002 which was revised in 2009.
- Sierra Leone Health Information Systems Strategic Plan (SLHISSP) 2007-2016.
- Reproductive, New-born and Child Health Policy (RNCHP) 2011-2015. This defines steps to fast-track MDGs improvement and centres on equality and the reduction of inconsistency in reproductive, new-born and child health care.
- Reproductive, New-born and Child Health Strategy (RNCHS) 2011-2015. This defines the approaches and key actions required to achieve RNCHP aims and objectives.
- Strategic Plan for Adolescent and Young People’s Health & Development (SPAYPHD) 2011-2015. This provides a framework which guides the line Ministries, particularly Health and Sanitation, Education, Science and Technology and Youths and Sports.
- Medical and Dental Act of 2008
- Pharmacy Board Act of 2007

- Agenda for Change policy document 2008-2012 (PRSP I)
- Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) in 2011. This precisely concentrated on pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children under the age of five years. Turnout at health facilities increased three-fold and it demonstrated that cost was a significant barrier in accessing health care (SLGHIS, 2011).
- The urge to provide minimum acceptable quality of care to every Sierra Leonean was also evident in the formulation of the PRSP II which articulates an “Agenda for Prosperity” 2013-2018 (PRSP II). This, the government argues, would opened up more opportunities for the participation of the private sector and at the same time brought in new challenges for all sectors of the health system. Competition between providers of clinical care and/or support services through single or multiple purchasers was promoted.

These policy documents provided the policy basis for Sierra Leone’s first National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015 (NHSSP) which the Government argues, could create an environment for health reconstruction. It provides a framework for improving the health of the nation and to fulfil the health sector’s contribution to the PRSP II, the Ouagadougou Declaration and the MDGs. The NHSSP also serves as a guide for all interventions by all parties at all levels in the national health system in Sierra Leone. It focuses on six areas to strengthen the health system. These are leadership and governance, service delivery, human resources for health, medical products, health technologies and health information systems. Other policies were also developed together with those listed above, aimed at improving the provision of health services. The Government enacted the Local Council Act in 2004 introducing the policy of decentralisation, and the Hospital Boards Act in 2003 to address the administration of all hospitals countrywide, in order to boost the involvement in and ownership of the health care system by the Local Councils and their communities. By doing this, the Government clearly emphasised the need for the participation of the private sector and NGOs in the health sector. According to Cassels (1995), it established a system for regulating, contracting with or franchising providers in the private sector, including NGOs and for-profit organisations. This, as Green (1999) argues, reflected the Government’s desire to pursue market-based approaches to the management and organisational relationships in the health sector.

To ensure equal access to health services and to provide wide-ranging health coverage to the population, the Government is planning also to introduce a mandatory health insurance for everyone. The benefit package will be covered by a Mandatory Health Plan, with free choice

of insurers and health care providers. According to Gaviria et al. (2006), it is intended that all individuals, regardless of their origin or economic means, will have access to a pre-established package of basic health services. This, Cassels (1995) said, represents the introduction of managed-market mechanisms into the health sector. McGregor (2001:83) and Isaacs (2006d) identified the language used in health care policies that is associated with the neo-liberal reform. For instance, these writers argue that terms such as management theories and practices which include phrases such as “the consumers”, “private health care”, and “consumers’ choice”, replacing words like practice, patient/client and professional. This reflects the growing influence of neo-liberal policies, and its power to alter our conceptual frameworks of interpretation by using specific forms of language (Ruthjersen, 2007). Therefore, Martinsen (2006:161) observed that, health care is today dominated by the concept of strategic and economic rationality, which demands that health professionals must prove their value in the name of efficiency.

To expedite the supremacy of the market in order to further economic efficiency, neo-liberals argue for minimal government intervention. According to Ollila (2005:187), proponents of the reform claimed that this substantial change in the content of global health policy rhetoric, from holistic policies based on universal social rights to policies emphasising result-based interventions would result in health gains and ultimately in the productiveness of populations. The main themes that this study has focused upon, linked to the neo-liberal health reforms are the policies of decentralisation, privatisation including health insurance, user-charges and cut in Government expenditure on health. A brief account of each is discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

10.3.1 Decentralisation

The Local Government Act of 2004 restored the function of Local Government after more than three decades. Since then, the decentralisation and devolution of authority have progressed rapidly with the aim of bringing service delivery and its management closer to the beneficiaries (NHSSP, 2010). Geographically, it was argued that decentralisation is meant to shrink the distances between central decision-making institutions and the people. Power is diffusing throughout a national space, bringing the state nearer to the citizens, thus enhancing democratisation and a participatory approach in previously autocratic regimes (Smith, 2007). Furthermore, Skewat (2003) argued that, the policy was also meant to make available central government funds to pay for the huge public debt taken from international financial institutions. Shifting the financial burden of public services from central

governments to the provinces, Skewat argues, was an expedite way to achieve that goal. Skewat claimed that, the policy of decentralisation was wrapped under the principle of transferring power from unconcerned and inefficient central bureaucrats to the people, and marketed as part of a democratisation process, even in countries under dictatorial and authoritarian regimes.

The health sector was among the first three sectors that were delegated to the Local Councils from 2004 to 2008 in Sierra Leone. It was the only sector, as the Government notes, which devolved all the services as planned. The process, according to the NHSSP (2010), started with devolution of PHCs, followed by District Hospitals. Since the end of 2008, the Government said that all the Local Councils (12 District Councils, 5 Town Councils, the Freetown City Council and the Western Area Rural Council) are now responsible for managing the delivery of both primary and secondary health care services. This claim will be evaluated in Chapter 12.

With the devolution of health services to the Local Authority, the NHSSP (2010) states that the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, core functions is to remain as a policy-maker, setting standards and quality assurance, mobilising resources, training of staff and providing technical support, providing nationally coordinated services such as epidemic control, co-ordination of health services, monitoring and evaluating the performance of all the sectors. The responsibilities of the District Councils are: implementing the national health policies, planning and management of district health services, provision of disease prevention, health promotion, curative and rehabilitative services, health education, ensuring provision of safe water and environmental sanitation, and health data collection, management, interpretation, dissemination and utilisation (NHSSP, 2010).

10.3.2 The Basic Package of Essential Health Services

The introduction of the NHSSP in 2010 led to the development of a basic package of health care services for Sierra Leoneans. This was a response to enhance health service provision in a post-conflict country. The Government stated that, this was a cost-effective strategy to deliver PHC services aimed at expanding health services rapidly, including sexual, reproductive and child health services in the immediate catchment areas (BPEHS-SL, 2010). The view was that, access to health care is a human right. The introduction of the basic package was also anchored in the Ministry's vision of ensuring a functional national health system capable of delivering efficient, high quality health care services that are equally accessible and affordable for everyone leading to an improvement in the health of its citizens.

As such, all of the services in the package are made available as an integrated whole, rather than being provided in piecemeal or as individual services. All partners and key stakeholders involved in the delivery of health services are required to use this BPEHS as the basis for planning and implementing their health programs/support (BPEHS-SL 2010). This package consists of seven distinct elements, namely:

- 1) It identifies the services that the MoHS-SL guarantees would be available to the population. Other services may be provided as a result of global initiatives, vertical programmes, or private donations but they would be added to, not substituted for the services contained in the Package.
- 2) It implies that a minimum number of health staff with appropriate skills would be present at each of the facility levels to provide the services.
- 3) It gives guidance for the content of training programmes by defining the technical and management competences required at different levels of the health system.
- 4) It gives guidance to what would constitute an essential drugs list for each level in the health system.
- 5) It is presented in such a way that costs can be estimated to give an idea of the financial resources that would be required for service provision.
- 6) It provides a basis to prepare operational plans and to design monitoring and evaluation tools.
- 7) It also provides a comprehensive list of services to be offered at five standard levels of health care within the Sierra Leone health system, namely: the Community level (TBAs, CHW), Maternal and Child Health Post level (MCH Aids), Community Health Post (CHAs) level, Community Health Centre (CHCs) levels, and District Hospital (Doctors, Nurses, Lab. Tech.).

10.3.3 User-Fees

Other commentators have argued that, charges levied for the provision of health services are part of neo-liberal health policies. They were introduced when stringent conditions were attached to loans from the World Bank and the IMF in the 1980s and 1990s, known as SAPs. More recently, they have been embedded in the PRSP documents of many countries, including Sierra Leone. Edward (2010) claimed that, in some countries, patients have been asked to pay informal fees, levied by health workers either to boost the revenue for their clinic or to supplement their own low salaries. Others such as Willis & Khan (2009) argue that, user-fees have been used as cost-recovery strategies at the community level and for

purchasing essential drugs. However, in recent years as the study will show in the evaluation chapter, strong evidence has emerged which shows that user-fees disproportionately damage the health of poor and marginalised people because they cannot afford them.

10.3.4 Privatisation

In Economics, Shah & Mohanty (2010) noted that, the private sector represents a part of the economy, which is operated by an individual or a group with the underlying objective of maximising profits. This policy, Bond & Dor (2003) argued, was actively promoted by the World Bank as is evident in its 2002 Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS), and in the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The aim, they argue, was to increase investments in private health care. Azhar, Jilani & Siddiqui (2009) said that, the reason for the growth of private health providers was to enforce the neo-liberal reforms and to compel most governments of developing nations to reduce public expenditure on social sectors, including health. They claimed that, the reduced subsidies on health and government's withdrawal from the social sector would result in market segmentation. This, in turn, would lead to the delivery of better quality health care services. It is this strategy, according to Chakravarti (2009), which has made it attractive for private investors to operate profitable health care programmes, which have resulted in increased private investment in health care. Health care insurance (HCI) now represents a lucrative business for the private sector. What is health care insurance?

10.3.5 Health Care Insurance

According to the World Health Assembly (WHA) in 2005, health insurance is a mechanism to collect and distribute resources for the health sector in a more equitable way, with pre-payment and risk pooling being considered preferable to payment at the point of service. Ericson et al. (2000:533) noted that, private insurance is a market-based alternative to managing risks (such as illness, accidents and death) as opposed to the state providing universal health care services to manage these risks. Neo-liberals argue that, it makes people more self-sufficient and responsible (Arnott & Stiglitz in Ericson et al., 2000:538). It also encourages innovation and efficiency in health care, and increases more choice for consumers (Callahan & Wasunna, 2000:217). It also promotes a form of governance and surveillance where consumers are frequently encourage to adopt good health practices, in order to demonstrate that they are doing enough to stay healthy (2000:551). Consequently, if a consumer is found not to have tried hard enough to maintain a respectable level of health,

he or she may be subjected to higher premiums, exclusions or other sanctions (Ericson et al., 2000:551).

According to Homedes & Ugalde (2005), HCI also included the creation of a third party administrator responsible for collecting and administering mandatory health insurance fees and government subsidies, and for contracting and paying service providers. They explained that, users, based on what insurance premiums they could afford, would be able to choose between different types of health plans and providers. Neo-liberals argue that, introducing health insurance would increase fairness and efficiency, and improve quality of care and user satisfaction.

People can opt-out of the public system by directing their mandatory health payment to a private insurance firms of their choice. These firms provide different sorts of health insurance policies, based on family size and total contribution, and each policy has distinct deductibles and co-payments. The middle and upper group tend to purchase a costly wide-ranging plan or a very appealing package to the mandatory basic plan and the poor are left with no choice but to use the public health system. There are four main types of health insurance, namely: private health insurance (PHI), micro health insurance (MHI), community-based health insurance (CBHI) and social health insurance (SHI). Each of these different forms of health insurance is discussed below.

10.3.5.1 Private Health Insurance

Sekhir & Savedoff (2005) observed that, PHI gives households an opportunity to avoid large out-of-pocket expenditure and provide them with access to financial protection that is otherwise lacking when paying for health services at the point of delivery. They explained that, PHI premiums are paid by an individual, shared between the employees and the employer or paid completely by the employer, and the insurance agents manage the premium fund. Government may subsidise the cost of PHI using tax credits or tax relief (Mossialos & Dixon, 2002). In some countries for instance, people are offered a clear choice between paying a proportion of their pay to the public health system or to a private health insurer. White et al. (2006) argued that, PHI tends to play a different role depending on a country's wealth and institutional development. Akortsu & Abor (2009) claimed that, in many lower and middle income countries, PHI may be the only form of risk pooling available and it usually provides principal coverage to those in the formal sector, with private policies frequently subsidised by employers. Membership is usually not compulsory and the premium is linked to the risk background of the member.

10.3.5.2 Micro Health Insurance

This type of health insurance is generally delivered to poor people and has a low premium with an inadequate benefit package. It also is provided on a for-profit basis. One of the services offered with the MHI scheme according to Roth & McCord (2007) is the primary health care or limited hospitalisation, which can protect households against catastrophic health expenditure. However, the coverage provided by such schemes is often restricted.

10.3.5.3 Community-Based Health Insurance

A World Health Organisation technical brief (2005) highlighted that, the CBHI schemes are often seen as an interim solution to help meet the financial needs of poor people and as a step towards the introduction of SHI. CBHI is a not-for-profit instrument founded upon cohesion among a reasonably small group of people. According to Berkhout & Oostingh (2008), the schemes vary a great deal in terms of who they cover, how, for what, and at what cost. They argued that the majority of CBHI schemes operate in rural areas, and their members are relatively poor. Because of their small scale, their voluntary nature, and their low premiums, such schemes face severe limitations in terms of financial sustainability and managerial capacity (Berkhout & Oostingh, 2008). CBHI is said to increase the involvement of communities in decision-making and health care policy development, which enhance the responsiveness of health services.

Berkhout & Oostingh (2008) also stated that, premiums are based on the risk profile of the community and not on individual members. They argue that, while there is a greater level of solidarity between people with higher and lower health risks, the level of cross-subsidisation between income groups is very limited, as most scheme members tend to be equally poor. Therefore, this scheme counts on only very small contributions from its members, and the health services it offers are normally complementary to services provided by the Governments (Berkhout & Oostingh, 2008). They also claim that, the success of such schemes depends largely on the quality of government financing and public health care services provided. Due to their smaller size and restricted coverage, the functioning of CBHI schemes in producing effective and equitable health systems is insignificant.

10.3.5.4 Social Health Insurance

Berkhout & Oostingh (2008) also argue that, among the main distinguishing features of SHI are the facts that membership is mandatory, and that premiums set are in proportion to income. They claimed that, payment into the system is generally shared by employers,

workers, and the government. SHI also has the possibility to generate large risk pools, and to support premiums for poorer members. This form of health financing according to Carrin et al. (2005) is generally recognised to be a powerful method to achieve universal health coverage with adequate financial protection for all against health care costs. However, it is argued that the financial sustainability of the scheme depends on sufficient allocation of government resources, as well as on the affordability of medicines, which in turn depends on local production or the import of generic drugs.

10.4 What do Proponents Say the Reforms Would Achieve?

Proponents of the neo-liberal health reforms claimed that, privatisation through deregulation and competition in the free-market eliminates bureaucracy, increased efficiency and productivity (Harvey, 2005:65). Given the long-term problems of corruption, incompetence and inefficiency in the running of the Sierra Leone state and its services this is an attractive claim to make. According to Friedman (2000:105), the private sector is seen as the primary engine of economic growth. The provision of health care, as Willis & Khan (2009) argue, has increasingly being incorporated into the logic of the market, where it is viewed as a 'commodity' to be bought and sold, rather than a service which is provided to individuals as citizens of a nation-state. Proponents believed that health services provided by private institutions are more efficient than public ones because they generate profit and allow the benefits of choice, quality and accessibility to trickle down to ordinary citizens.

Mariott (2009) put forward six arguments for privatising health care delivery, namely: 1) expansion of private health services, 2) it takes the strain off public health services, 3) It is more efficient, 4) It is of better quality, 5) it can reach the poorest and 6) it can improve accountability through competition.

The World Health Assembly (2005) claimed that, there were a number of advantages in financing health care from health insurance schemes in poor countries, namely:

- 1) It increases the availability of resources for health care by freeing up limited public funds to be directed towards poor people.
- 2) It offers a more predictable source of funding compared with the unpredictability of tax revenues. This also facilitates private investment in health.
- 3) The pooling of resources allows for cross-subsidies between those who are healthy and those who are sick, and between the rich and the poor.
- 4) It reduces uncertainty for citizens and gives them financial protection against impoverishment as a consequence of illness.

- 5) It contributes to better-quality health care by separating the purchasing and provision of services, especially if payment is based on performance.
- 6) People are more willing to pay for health insurance than to pay taxes, as their contribution is linked to entitlement.

According to Willis & Khan (2009), proponents of the reforms also claim that, the policy of decentralisation promotes greater democratisation, patient participation and choice, as well as improving efficiency in service delivery. They argue that, the policy is supported by international institutions as a key strategy for good governance and as a pragmatic response to encourage international health care reform. Proponents also argue that, the policy is regarded as a key element in promoting greater equality in access to health care services, while also recognising limited government budgets allocated to the health sector. It is seen as more responsive to the needs of the community (Standing, 2002).

The World Bank (1997) outlined the following advantages of the decentralisation policy, namely: a) to bring about a more rational and unified health service that caters for local preferences, b) to improve implementation of health programmes, c) to decrease duplication of services, d) to reduce inequalities between different target audiences, e) to contain costs due to streamlining, f) to increase community involvement in health care, g) to improve integration of health care activities between public and private agencies, and h) to improve the coordination of health care services (cf. McGregor, 2001). In essence, decentralisation is supposed to provide equal access and improve efficiency, accountability and the quality of health care.

10.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the study discussed the neo-liberal health reforms that have been introduced in Sierra Leone since the end of the conflict. The aim, according to proponents of the reforms was to improve access to and the quality and efficiency of the system. It was shown that the need for the reforms was based on the severity of health problems and dysfunctionality of the health system. This, as the study shows, was reflected in the UNDP health indicators, where the country performed poorly compared with the rest of the world in 2005 and 2006. More important was the declining quality in the delivery of health care and the growing users' discontent in its delivery that raises a human security concern. The reforms were introduced even though there was not enough qualified staff and institutional capacity was inadequate.

The chapter also examined the various health policy documents that the Government has enacted so far to address the above problems. The most significant of these were the Local Government Act of 2004, the National Health Policy of 2002 which was revised in 2009 and the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015. The neo-liberal reforms compel most governments in developing countries to reduce public expenditure on social sectors, including health care. The Government of Sierra Leone established a system for regulating, contracting with or franchising providers in the private sectors including NGOs. Health insurance was introduced as a mechanism to collect and equally distribute resources for the health sector, with pre-payment and risk pooling being considered preferable to payment at the point of service. Another aspect of the reform was the proposal to introduce a benefit package that would be covered by a Mandatory Health Plan. This, proponents observe, would result in market segmentation, which would improve the quality of health care services. Private providers, neo-liberals argue, are more efficient and cost effective than public ones. The chapter also shows that decentralisation could lead to democratisation and the participation of people in decision-making, as well as improving efficiency in service delivery. This policy was meant to release central government funds to pay for the huge public debt taken from international financial institutions. The next chapter will evaluate the claims made by proponents of the neo-liberal reforms to understand their effectiveness in achieving the goal of human security.

Chapter 11

A Critical Evaluation of Neo-liberal Education Reforms in Sierra Leone

11.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the study seeks to do two things, namely:

- 1) To critically evaluate the effects of neo-liberal education policies in achieving the goal of human security and to assess the claims made by its proponents.
- 2) To analyse the reforms from a critical theory perspective as:
 - A form of power/knowledge and ideology,
 - Governance, understood as power by national elites and unaccountable international institutions, and as
 - To whether it reduces the substance of democracy, as it takes control and the ability to influence policy-making away from ordinary people and places it in the hands of increasingly unaccountable private institutions, international institutions and governments, who put the interests of those corporations and international financial institutions before those of their own populations.

The rest of the chapter is organised into three parts. The first introduces contemporary statistics on education and development in Sierra Leone. This provides a broader picture of the human security situation in the country from the perspectives of education. The second assesses the process by which the reforms were introduced, and the third evaluate the effects of the reforms on human security. It does this by focusing on key themes that emerged from the documentary review, interviews and focus group discussions. The questions centred on the processes, through which the reform was introduced and its effects on the citizens. The evaluation on the effects of the reforms is limited to the privatisation and decentralisation policies on education. Understanding these effects offers a way of addressing the concerns raised by Horkheimer, Habermas and Cox. They argue that, a critical theory analysis of neo-liberalism must begin by exploring how people in society understand ideological manipulation of policies, primarily led by international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF, which affect human security. In doing so, the study seeks to answer the first and second research questions below:

- 1) What are the processes by which the neo-liberal reform was introduced?
- 2) How successful was the reform in improving education security in Sierra Leone?

Research question four was answered in Chapter 6, sub-section 6.5. Critical theory has an emancipatory intent aiming to achieve social change towards a more fair society. It reveals the hidden power relations, the governance approach, the use of language and ideology that have created conditions of domination, subordination, marginalisation and inequality, which have, in many ways, been seen as a depiction of the imposition of neo-liberal policies (see Chapter 3). Political forces and structures, particularly the World Bank and the IMF, appear to leave the people without any voice, and this Critical Theorists argue, produce population inequalities in decision-making. According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994), critical theory focuses on the critique and transformation of such forces and structures, relationships, and conditions that shape and constrain the development of social practices. It does this by examining them within their historical, social, cultural and political contexts. What this chapter shows is that the reforms has not been successful in improving education security in Sierra Leone, rather they have served the interests of ruling political elites and international private corporations and financial institutions.

The evaluation covers the period after the civil conflict in 2002. According to Periago (2012), human security focuses on the risk, dangers and threats of excluding people from participating in policy formulation which undermine human development. Hence, the aim of the evaluation process is three fold. First, to assess the success of the neo-liberal education policies to ascertain whether they actually work or not in achieving the goal of human security. Second, to provide a better understanding of the socio-economic development in the country as education is now viewed as a commodity. Third, to improve the performance of programmes meant to serve the greatest needs of the community. Table 11.0 below shows key education documents that were reviewed in order to understand the effects of the reforms on human security. Table 11.1 provides a summary of the specific neo-liberal policies, emerging themes from documents reviewed, interviews and focus group discussions that were conducted, the neo-liberal claims made in favour of each policies and human security goals. These tables will serve as a guide in the evaluation process. Human security is measured using six indicators that were mentioned in Chapter 1, namely: accessibility, affordability, quality, equality, efficiency of service delivery, and citizens' participation in designing and formulating policies.

Table 11.0 Key Education Documents Reviewed

Key Documents Reviewed	
Title	Year
Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan: A Road Map to a Better Future 2007-2015.	2007
Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy 2012-2016.	2011
EFA Global Monitoring Report Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work.	2012
African Economic Outlook Sierra Leone.	2011
Sierra Leone Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Final Report.	2011
Sierra Leone National Education Policy.	2010
Report on Education Financing, Governance and Accountability in Sierra Leone.	2010
Sierra Leone Millennium Development Goals Progress Report.	2010
Explanatory Notes on Human Development Report Sierra Leone.	2013
Making Progress: Schools and Students in Sierra Leone. School Census Report.	2011
Sierra Leone Government White Paper on the Commission of Enquiry into the Poor Performance of Pupils in the 2008 Basic Education Certificate Examination and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination.	2010

Source: Author's idea

Table 11.1 Summary of Neo-liberal Policies, Themes, Neo-liberal Claims and Human Security Goals.

Summary of Neo-liberal Education Policies	Emerging Theme from Interviews & Focus Group Discussions	Neo-liberal Claims	Human Security Goals
Privatisation	Inequality, social exclusion, high charges, inadequate government regulations, influence by external institutions.	Improve the quality of services, reduce cost, consumer choice, competition, more efficient and effective, lead to economic growth.	Equality; Social justice, human emancipation, bottom-up approach, people-centred, empowering humanity, offers a critical perspective on the very sources of inequality, fairness, encourages a participatory process in decision-making.
Decentralisation	Lack of community participation in decision-making, influence by external institutions, corruption, lack of institutional capacity, conflict in responsibilities between the Council and Central Government.	Make Local Government accountable to the local community, encourages democratic participation, improve the quality of service delivery.	
Reduction in government expenditure on education	Affect the quality of education, lack of educational infrastructure, poor condition of service for staff, influence by external institutions.	Reduce government deficit, enable the government to honour external debts.	
Process in which the reforms were introduced	Anti-democratic, undermine policy autonomy, may exacerbate civil unrest, influence by international institutions.	Increase efficiency, improve governance, increase citizens' participation in decision-making, empowering communities, institutions become more accountable.	

Source: Author's idea

11.2 Contemporary Statistics on Education and Development

This section examines the state of education and development in Sierra Leone, taken from the documentary review. The purpose is to support the evidence obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions that will be shown in the second part of this chapter. Literacy is a human right and is a means of gaining knowledge. It empowers and liberates individuals, families and communities by enhancing their quality of life and human security. Because of its “multiplier effect”, it helps to eradicate poverty, reduce child mortality, curb population growth, achieve gender equality and ensure sustainable development, peace and democracy (UNESCO, 2005). This connection between education and human development is fundamental to raising output and advancing growth.

11.2.1 Type of Schools

The table below shows the number of schools in the country:

Table 11.2 Different Types of Schools in Sierra Leone

Schools/Type	Govt	Private	Community	Missions	Other Agencies	Total
Pre-Primary	43	257	81	254	9	644
Primary	1023	306	660	3908	34	5931
Junior Secondary	67	136	168	505	12	888
Senior Secondary	19	46	17	123	3	208
Total	1152	745	926	4790	58	7671
% of schools	15	10	12	62	0.8	100

Source: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MEST-SL, 2011)

Table 11.2 shows that mission schools account for over 62% of all schools in the country, while 10% are private schools. Government schools account for only 15% compared with community schools at 12%. Data from MEST-SL (2011) also revealed that there are 10 Community Education Centres (CECs) for the provision of Non-Formal Education (NFE) nation-wide and 380 Technical/Vocational (TVET) institutions below tertiary level that are provided both by the Government and private institutions (commercial, faith-based organisations and NGOs). There are seven institutions providing teacher training programmes, and three universities, two public universities (University of Sierra Leone and N’jala University) and one private (University of Makeni), which are responsible for providing higher education.

11.2.2 Enrolment Rate

According to the Agenda for Change Progress Report (2012:41), the number of children attending schooling has not been up to the required level. Gross primary school enrolment declined from 1,324,968 in 2007/08 to 1,194,503 in 2010/11. The report suggests that, this might partly be explained by a reduction in the number of children above the primary school going age, and partly by an increase in the drop-out rate at primary schools. Other explanation could be that the establishment have not prioritise education in its development plans, and as reflected the interviews and focus group discussions, many more of the children under school leaving age are at home or roaming the street. The fact that government has made primary education free and compulsory does not mean that education is provided free, as children have to pay for various activities which their parents cannot afford. Gross Junior Secondary School (JSS) enrolment has increased by 25% only during the last four years, from 195,215 in 2007/08 to 244,489 in 2010/11, a 6% annual increase during the period. However, the quality of education has been affected by the inadequate provision of schools to accommodate this increase.

The Country Report for Sierra Leone West Africa Policy Analysis Project (2010:12) indicated that the structures may have significantly restricted the participation of children beyond primary level, especially in remote areas. The 2010/2011 School Census Report reveals that access is relatively good at the primary level, but is unsatisfactory at both the junior and senior secondary levels. Access to pre-primary schools is also disappointing. Primary and secondary enrolment rates more than doubled between 2000 and 2007. However, 30% of school-aged children are still out of school (UNICEF, 2008). The literacy rate amongst the youth and adult populations is low, and this undermine achieving the goal of human security.

Evidence also suggests that, regional disparities in access to education obviously still present in post-war Sierra Leone. The recent census data collected by MEST-SL in 2011 reported enrolment of children for the Western Area and Eastern region as 22%, while the North and Southern region are 33% and 23% respectively. A breakdown of enrolment by sex in all four regions is shown in the table below.

Table 11.3 Education Enrolment by Sex in all Four Regions in Sierra Leone

Enrolment by sex in all four regions				
Regions	In all Levels			
	Male	Female	Total	% by Region
East	178,635	165,302	343,937	22
North	284,586	242,397	526,983	33
South	193,743	175,924	369,667	23
West	174,266	169,733	343,999	22
National	831,230	753,356	1,584,586	100
% by Sex	52	48	100	Blank

Source: Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology Data (2010)

11.2.3 Quality of Education

At all levels of education, the country is still struggling to improve equality in access, relevance, and quality of education to its citizens. In the case of providing quality education, the report by MEST-SL in 2011 estimated that, 40% of teachers at primary schools are untrained, as are 10% at the secondary level. This is a major concern, and makes it difficult for the Government to achieve the goals of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Quality Education (QE), which would allow pupils a successful transition from the primary level to the junior and senior level and then to university. The report also indicated that the Northern Region takes the largest share, over 50% of unqualified teachers (MEST-SL, 2011). This is reflected in the education indicators reported in the Human Development Report below.

Table 11.4 Human Development Report on Education in Sierra Leone 2013

Indicators	Values
Public expenditure on education (% of GDP)	4.3
Primary school teachers trained to teach (%)	48
Expected years of schooling for children	7.3
Adult literacy rate, both sexes (% age 15 & above)	42.1
Mean year of schooling of adult	3.3
Education index	0.326

Source: United Nations Human Development Report (2013)

One of the key indicators of the HDI is the Education Index. This is very useful to assess the education security that exists in a country. It indicates the education attainment (adult literacy rate) per country, and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (UNHDR report, 2013). As Table 11.4 shows, the value for the Education Index in Sierra Leone is 0.33, showing the low level of education in the country. The adult literacy rate gives an indication of the ability of a country's population to read and write. The report recognises that education is a major component of well-being and is used in the measure of economic development and quality of life, which is a key factor in determining whether a country is developed, developing or underdeveloped. That makes it an appropriate measure of human security.

11.2.4 Illiteracy Rate

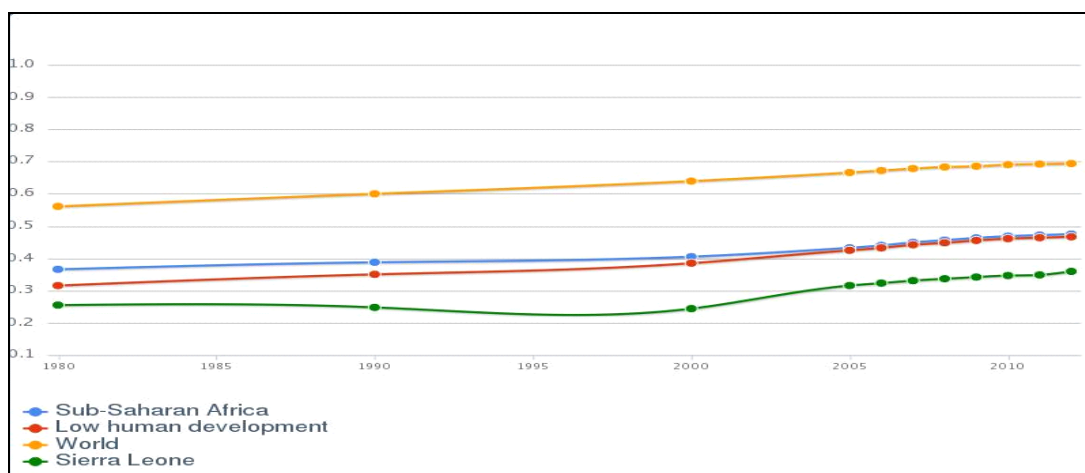
Sierra Leone's Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS) conducted in 2008 found that 55% of men and 74% of women were illiterate. This has a significant impact on human security in the country. The survey showed that people in rural areas are more likely to be illiterate than their urban counterparts. The proportion of illiterate rural men was 73% and that of urban men was 26% (SLDHS, 2008). For women, the proportion is 89% and 47% respectively (MEST-SL, 2011). Evidence suggest that a fairly large, but decreasing number of people do not have the means to acquire formal education at all. Thirty-five percent of the population are classified as youth, 70% of whom are currently without formal work (Government Agenda for Change, 2007), probably because they missed their chance of a formal education during the war years, and their parents unable to afford to pay additional charges for their children. Young adults represent the country's most valuable resource, but they form the group, in which the Government observes, social unrest could be ignited as a result of a lack of employment (MEST-SL, 2011). These statistics indicate that Sierra Leone has one of the lowest literacy rates amongst adults in the world. This alarming situation undermines the provision of UPE, a prerequisite for achieving human security.

It is argued that, literate parents, particularly mothers, are more likely to appreciate the value of sending their children to school. The worrying illiteracy rate in the country affects the ability of parents to offer their children considerable assistance to succeed in school such as supervising homework, inspiring them, and encouraging their progress. Other commentators have argued that illiteracy is not only a product of widespread poverty but also one of the causes of sustained poverty. Therefore, breaking the cycle is critical for personal and national development.

11.2.5 Human Development Index

Below is a graph showing a trend of the Human Development Index from 1980 for Sierra Leone, sub-Saharan Africa and the world.

Figure 11.0 Human Development Index: Trends From 1980 - Present



Source: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SLE.html>

The United Nations publishes each year the Human Development Index (HDI) which was introduced as an alternative to conventional measures of national development, such as level of income and the rate of economic growth (see the Human Development Report). The HDI reflects a desire for a broader definition of well-being and provides a composite measure of three basic dimensions of human development: health, education and income as key indicators of human security. Between 1980 and 2012, Sierra Leone's HDI declined by minus 0.3% annually from 0.255 to 0.359 (HDR, 2013). The figure of 0.359 according to the report, is below the average of 0.466 for countries in the Low Human Development group and below the average of 0.475 for countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This places Sierra Leone at 177 out of 187 countries (HDR, 2012). This ranking according to the HDR, highlights the very large gaps in well-being and life chances that citizens continue to face in Sierra Leone.

11.2.6 Government Budget on Education

According to the World Bank (2007), the expansion and quality improvement in the education system imply an increasing demand for education resources in Sierra Leone. In consequence, adequate mobilisation of resources and sensible administration of them are essential to achieving Sierra Leone's education goals. Spending on education by the Government has increased rapidly since 2000. In relation to total Government expenditure (current and development) and to GDP, it remained relatively steady over that time. The

share of Government expenditure committed to education was about 19% between 2001 and 2004, the largest share for any sector, and very close to the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) benchmark of 20% (World Bank, 2007). According to the World Bank, about half of current Government expenditure on education goes to pre-primary and primary education, and about 20–25% is assigned to secondary education. The decline in Government expenditure was attributed to the introduction of neo-liberal reforms, which requires the Government to reduce social spending, for example on education and health care. The share for secondary education continues to decrease in recent years despite the expansion required because of the recent increases in primary enrolments. The World Bank also noted that the portion for technical and vocational education also fell from the already low 9% in 2000 to 4% in 2004. Tertiary education consumes about 20% of education resources, a share that has risen considerably in recent years (World Bank, 2007). Household offerings to education were noted as very high. It was argued that support from external donors is an important part of funding education in Sierra Leone, although there are relatively few donors. Because households are already contributing a large amount (and many of those not yet in school come from the poorest families) and public resources are stretched, increased donor funding will be needed to increase access to quality education (see World Bank, 2007). A breakdown of Government expenditure on education from 2000 to 2008 is shown in the table below:

Table 11.5 Sierra Leone Government Expenditure on Education (2000-2008)

Indicator	Government expenditure on education 2000- 2008								
	Actual					Estimate ^a			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Current Le (Millions)									
Total education expenditure	65,842	74,347	93,268	106,092	121,580	133,395	165,184	188,714	208,725
Current	65,428	73,685	86,901	101,464	113,110	132,594	163,484	187,014	207,875
Development	414	662	6,367	4,628	8,470	805	1,700	1,700	850
Constant 2003 Le (Millions)									
Total education expenditure	69,867	77,525	100,935	106,092	104,799	101,454	111,040	116,749	119,592
Current	69,428	76,834	94,045	101,464	97,498	100,844	109,898	115,698	119,105
Development	439	690	6,890	4,628	7,301	612	1,143	1,053	487
Education expenditure as a % of GDP	4.95	4.65	4.75	4.56	4.11	3.72	3.90	3.32	3.09
Education current expenditure as a % of GDP	4.9	4.6	4.4	4.4	3.9	3.8	3.8	N/A	N/A
Education as a % of total government expenditure	17.2	15.7	16.6	17.0	16.9	17.4	16.4	16.6	19.0
Education as a % of total government current expenditure ^b	21.7	18.6	18.3	19.9	19.4	20.8	22.8	24.0	24.7
% of domestically generated current resources in education ^c	25.3	24.3	21.7	21.7	18.4	19.0	17.8	N/A	N/A
education current expenditure per school-aged population (6-21 yrs; constant 2003 Le)	40,848	44,249	53,015	55,998	52,661	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

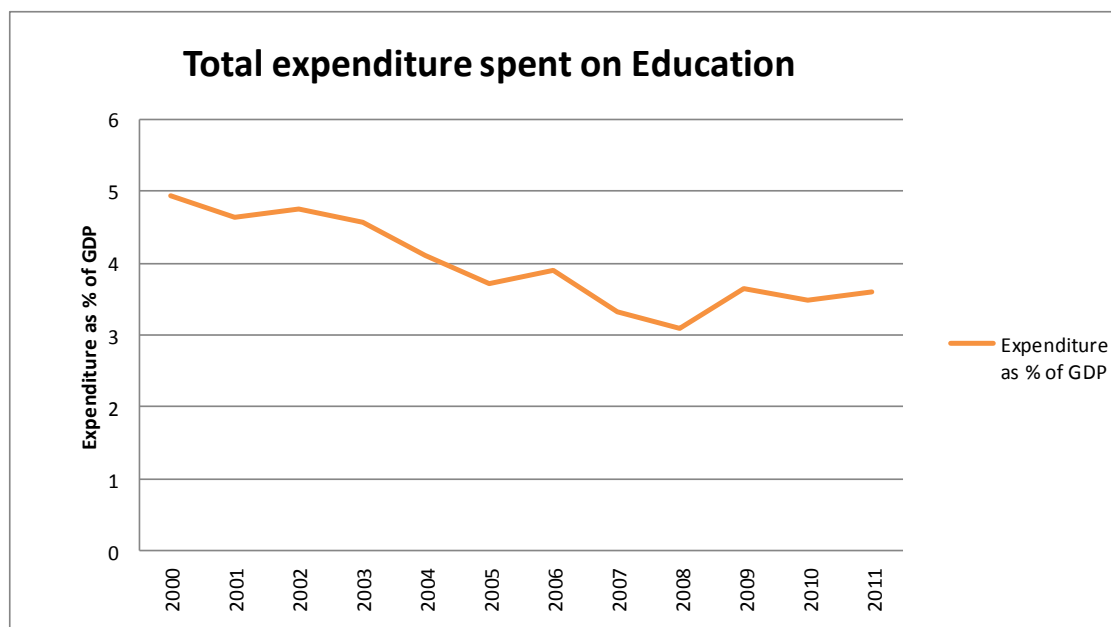
Source: Ministry of Finance & Economic Development-Sierra Leone

N/A: Not Available

- a. Figures from 2006 to 2008 include transfers to local councils for areas of education that have been decentralised
- b. The Fast Track Initiative (FTI) benchmark for the share of current spending in domestic revenues is 20 percent
- c. Estimates based on the proportion of total public resources that are domestic and donor.

As Table 11.5 shows, both current and development spending on education have risen since 2000, though at different rates. According to the World Bank (2007), it shows that, in line with the reconstruction and expansion required after the war years, development expenditure increased in real terms, from about Le 400 million in 2000 to Le 7,300 billion in 2004 (the bulk of the increase taking place in 2002). The reason for this increase was that immediately after the war there was the need to reconstruct and rehabilitate most of the learning institutions that have been destroyed during the war years. This is an increase of more than 16 times the 2000 level. Current expenditure makes up the bulk of the education budget, increasing at an average rate of 9% per year between 2000 and 2004 in real terms (World Bank, 2007). On the other hand, annual expenditure as a percentage of GDP can be seen on the graph below.

Figure 11.1 Total Government Expenditure as % of GDP from 2000 to 2011



Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/sierra-leone> (see also *Ministry of Finance and Economic Development Sierra Leone*).

The graph indicates that total spending on education as a percentage of GDP has not been consistent over the period 2000-2011. According to the World Bank, public expenditure on education as percentage of GDP is the total public expenditure (current and capital) on education expressed as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in a given year. This includes government spending on education institutions (both public and private), education administration, and transfers/subsidies for private entities (students/households and other private entities). Approximately 20% of current Government spending, the largest of any of the sectors, is allocated to education. An estimated 48% to 50% is allocated to primary education, and about 25% of the rest to secondary education with junior secondary having around 19% (see World Bank data at <http://data.worldbank.org/country/sierra-leone>). Government expenditure on education represents 4.9% of GDP in the year 2000 and this fell to 3.09% in 2011. It was noted that expenditure on education comes not only from the Government; households also contribute significantly to education. Research has shown that about 50% of the spending on primary education comes from households. For secondary education the percentage is even higher at approximately 60%. In terms of consumption, the Country Sector Report on education estimated that only about 43% of the expenditure on education benefits females (Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan, 2007).

11.3 Evaluating the Process by Which the Reforms Were Developed

In this section, the study shows how the education reform was developed and introduced and what people think about it in Sierra Leone. The aim is to understand whether the reform was imposed upon the Government or whether it was locally developed through a participatory and inclusive approach. It also seek to understand whether the policies are ideological, and were instituted as a way of controlling or subordinating people to a particular mode of governance. As Gouldson and Murphy (1998) point out, the effectiveness and efficiency of policies depend on how they are planned and implemented. This will draw our attention to the way in which such policies were introduced.

Evidence from this study suggests that the introduction of the reforms has been influenced by international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF. An overwhelming 85% of the participants interviewed believed that the reforms have been imposed upon the Sierra Leonean people. This reflects the fact that the Government received aid which includes financial support from the IMF and the World Bank, and it highlights the power dynamics and the influence of external institutions in the reform process. This, Horkheimer (1978:51) pointed out, subjects people and state to the rule of increasingly repressive forms of political and economic organisation. The result of this influence is to disempower the marginalised and reinforce social inequalities. The main indicator that I have used here is citizens' participation in designing and formulating policies. Such influence by the international institutions, as the study notes, excludes the participation of citizens in policy-making and this explains the unequal power relations, discussed in Chapter 3, which is central to critical theory. As Moutsious (2010:129) writes,

“.....power in contemporary education policy lies in the interaction between global capital, states and transnational institutions and the strategies, arrangements and decisions of their policy-making elites, who are able to mobilise economic, institutional and discursive resources to realise their agendas.”

In bringing together such resources, Moutsious states that, policy-making elites encourage the institutionalisation of policies and discourses dictated to them by external actors (p. 122). The Sierra Leone Government has been co-opted to adopt neo-liberal education policies even though they run counter to the goals of its own population and of human security. This way of producing knowledge, from a critical point of view, is inadequate and undemocratic. Commentators such as Campbell (1998), Verger (2012) and Mintrom (1997) have referred

to the policy-making elites as “policy entrepreneurs”. This is because they frame strategies that invoke symbols and concepts that help them to justify chosen policy solutions to the public. As the study has shown in Chapter 5, these policy entrepreneurs have been instrumental in the spread of the neo-liberal education policies, which now dominate the political landscape of many countries, including Sierra Leone, as a political and economic policy for social and economic development.

It is important here to distinguish between “a policy” and “policy process.” According to Rizvi & Lingard (2010:4), policy is defined as positions taken by the state, while policy process, is taken, generally, to be “the chronology of an issue coming onto the policy agenda” and, specifically, to “the construction of a policy text” which represents the position assumed by the state (p. 14). They explained that, in practice, evaluating the way in which policy is developed must be done in such a way that one can not only trace the chronology of an issue coming onto the policy agenda, but also the dynamics of the way that the policy in question becomes a position taken by the state, and how this develops in a policy text. In Chapters 3 and 6, the study emphasised the importance of citizens’ participation in policy-making to achieve human security. This section is therefore limited to the policy processes. I asked the following questions to understand the policy processes involved in introducing these reforms:

- 1) What is your view about the way in which the reforms were developed and introduced?
- 2) Do you think this approach to policy formulation is effective? If no, why?
- 3) What do you think the Government should do in order to develop effective policies?

On the first question, the responses, both from the interviews and focus group discussions significantly supported the view that the reforms were dictated to the Government. The emphases focused on three themes, which participants said, are the consequences of a top-down approach (neo-liberal reforms) to formulating policies. The interviewees’ point out that: first, the approach is anti-democratic; second, it undermines the policy autonomy of the state; and third, it may generate civil unrest if the standard of living is not improved.

A Government official in the Education Ministry, who asked to remain anonymous, was asked of his views on how the neo-liberal education policies were developed and introduced, the official stated that:

“The education policies are determined by external actors and introduced in a top-down fashion. The consultation process excludes the beneficiaries of the reforms and other major

stakeholders. Our role is to ensure that we implement these reforms” (Freetown, 13/01/2011).

I asked who the external actors are. The official replied:

“The World Bank and the IMF” (Freetown, 13/01/2011).

The official attributed this one-way flow of formulating policies to the dependence of the Government on these institutions for aid and loans.

When the official was asked what the Government should do to be able to develop effective policies? The response was:

“To improve on the consultation process to understand the real problems of the people, and then translate these into concrete policy documents. The Government should try to be less dependent on international institutions by managing the nation’s resources prudently” (Freetown, 13/01/2011).

Similar sentiments were also expressed by other interviewees. Another interviewee in a focus group discussion held in Freetown said that:

“The development of effective policies requires a democratic process where people participate equally. Such a process should not only be done in choosing our president and parliamentarians, but should also extend to policy development as well. This is very important because policies are usually translated into development programmes. It will provide the platform for all to participate equally and this will only be possible if we free ourselves from dependency culture” (Freetown, 14/01/2011).

This supports the comment made about Sierra Leone in 2011 by Henry Bellingham, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Africa & the United Nations:

“Even though the country has got a functioning democracy at the service of its people, who have seen a rare peaceful handover of power from one party to another in a democratic election, the input from the public is not necessarily taken into consideration or extensive consultations are not been carried out to develop a nationally-owned policy.”

Habermas saw democracy as a particular structure of free and open communication, and argues that, any form of ideology restricts or limits such processes of communication and undermines the conditions of success within them (Bohman, 2005).

Equality and participation in developing policies, as the study has shown, should result from seeking a broad range of consensus from people. Otherwise there is likely to be criticism of the inequalities and injustices resulting from the inappropriate distribution of power in society (Shahramnia, 2011).

In Chapter 3, Arce (2006:30) described the concept of marketisation, by which citizens are excluded from decision-making that affects their lives as:

“Placing societal actors in the role of passive recipients of state initiatives, incapable of contesting or modifying the implementation of market reforms.”

Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 5, the civil society activist, Abu Brima, called for citizens’ voices, especially youths and women, to be included in policy development. The lack of democratic process in developing policies was criticised by Joseph Stiglitz, and Pettifor & Hanlon. Stiglitz (2000) said:

“The IMF likes to go about its business without outsiders asking too many questions. In theory, the fund supports democratic institutions in the nations it assists. In practice, it undermines the democratic process by imposing policies. This means, the IMF does not allow sufficient time for broad consensus-building or even widespread consultations with either parliaments, civil society or its citizens. Sometimes it dispenses with the pretence of openness altogether and negotiates secret covenants.”

Pettifor and Hanlon (2000) also agreed with Stiglitz on the lack of democratic processes in developing policies. They note that:

“Top-down conditionality has undermined democracy by making elected governments accountable to Washington-based institutions instead of to their own people. The potential for unaccountability and corruption therefore increases as well.”

The Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy developed in 2011 also identified the lack of democratic practices in developing policies:

“The development, circulation and discussion of education policy documents has remained within very limited circles, with many key stakeholders having only had minimal access to and engagement with it. There is thus a general lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of the content, context and inter-linkages of the various education sector policies and strategies among staff and stakeholders within MEST and especially at district and school levels. This has inevitably resulted in the poor integration and implementation of policies and a lack of coordination and consistency across the sector.”

These evidences highlight a great weakness in the education policy development process. The findings of a study carried out by Chinsinga (2007) in Malawi titled: *The Social Protection Policy in Malawi: Processes, Politics, and Challenges* revealed that:

“Policy design has so far been totally driven and determined by donor agencies, particularly DFID and the World Bank. Politicians are yet to be engaged in the process, neither have the lower level of government structures, widely touted as the locus of implementation within the framework of decentralisation, nor the grassroots been consulted or meaningfully involved in the process as yet. Consultations with Local Government structures and the grassroots are planned for after the policy is finalised. Therefore, the involvement of the stakeholders should be an integral part of the policy process in order to stimulate public debate at political, technocratic and community levels, which is currently virtually non-existent.”

This supports the view that education policies should be developed by all stakeholders, and that citizens should be seen as the main actors in the process and not as passive recipients and target groups. Ünay (2010:47) contended that high-ranking development technocrats, rather than the public officials, citizens and civil society institutions from the borrowing country, determined the policy priorities in their operations. This point about the role of technocrats in the formation of policy reflects the long-standing concern in critical theory with the erosion of democracy in favour of forms of management that takes power, control and decisions out of the hands of citizens, themes that both Habermas and Cox have emphasised repeatedly in their work. Moreover, strict conditionality of Bank loans, which were frequently incorporated into IMF-led structural adjustment packages, created significant pressures on the borrowing states.

The Global Monitoring Report in 2008 emphasised that genuine participation requires a transformation in the local power dynamics. Horkheimer and Habermas support the view that, “all conditions of social life that are controllable by human beings should depend on real consensus” in a rational society (see Chapter 4). Clearly, this is not how policy decisions have been made in Sierra Leone with regard to education or health care, rather they have been decisions made out of the reach of the public and in accord with the ideological framework of neo-liberalism as a form of global governance (Cox, 1997). Horkheimer and Habermas said that, it excludes many people from having their voices heard, placing power in the hands of elites and out of the hands of citizens, significantly undermining the substance of the democratic process.

The issue of dependency raised by some interviewees shows how the influence of international forces directly and indirectly shapes national policies. Such influence, as Naidoo (2001) pointed out, depends on whether a country has a strong state and a strong power. Gilpin stated that a hard (strong) state is able to resist the potential negative effects of external market forces (by emphasising distinctive domestic policy issues), channelling them to its own advantage and managing its economy effectively, while a soft state is pliable, at the mercy of external market forces and unable to control its own economic affairs (in Naidoo, 2001). For example, other commentators have argued that the political economy of many East and South East Asian countries is hinged on the paradigm of developmentalism. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and Korea demonstrate these features of developmental states at different phases of their development, where the state continues to play a central role in directing their national policy roadmap and safeguarding state-guided development initiatives, which illustrates that affirmative action policies have been used as wide-ranging tools to introduce state-guided neoliberalism. The latter (soft state) is the case with Sierra Leone, because, being soft and in the periphery, as Gilpin points out, makes it dependent on support from international institutions. This uneven relationship, Naidoo argues, sets structural constraints on the achievement of human security for the poorest states and their inhabitants.

11.4 Evaluating the Neo-liberal Education Reforms

In this section, the study assesses the reforms in order to understand whether or not they were successful in improving human capital through education. It specifically focuses on three main policies discussed in Chapter 8, namely: privatisation and the imposition of user-fees, and decentralisation. It is intended to answer the second research question: “How

effective was the reform in increasing education security in Sierra Leone?” The section is divided into two parts, each discussing the effects of one of the policies mentioned above. Arce wrote that, “Different sets of policy reforms impose different patterns of costs and benefits on different sectors in a society. This shapes the incentives to adapt or form new societal organisations and to engage in collective action” (Arce, 2006). He concluded that the existing generalisation about the winners and losers of the reform suffer from a whole-reform bias, treating marketisation as a single entity rather than a package of many different policies. This study agrees with Arce and that is why the effects of each policy in achieving the goal of human security have been assessed separately.

In education, neo-liberals view schools as a commodity and parents and students as consumers in the market wherein there is choice of school options (Shiller, 2011:162). The aim of the research was to capture the views of interviewees who see the current political discourse around school reform as factors that affect their human security. Their experience would make an important contribution to education policies. As a result, the bulk of the data for this section came from interviews and focus group discussions.

11.4.1 Assessing the Effects of the Privatisation Policy

The objectives of the privatisation policy, proponents argue, are to encourage competition, improve the quality of education, reduce cost, and give parents and students more choice. According to Horkheimer, market-driven reforms are seen as the progressive strengthening of market enterprise and power, and this, he said, has added to the destructive influence these political and economic changes have on human subjectivity (Walentowicz, 2006:68). The language of privatisation, according to Ball & Youdell (2008), is not always overtly present in policy documents. They argue that the vocabulary of choice, improvement, quality, effectiveness and efficiency has been used instead. For Cox, specific language describing concepts such as ‘the consumer’, ‘free choice’ and ‘individual freedom’ are aligned with the idea of neo-liberalism. This, he said, has become a medium of power and social practice in which forms of subordination are manifested. While discourse and language are at the heart of social practices and processes, Fairclough (1992) argues that discursive practice is manifested in linguistic form. For example, Fairclough observes that the way in which texts are put together and interpreted, how texts are produced, distributed, and read, and the nature of social practice in terms of its relation to social structures and struggles conveyed the ideological stance of international institutions.

While the interviewees responses have been mixed, the evidence suggest that this policy creates inequality in access to education services. This has a very serious consequence in achieving human security. The following questions were asked:

“What is your view about this policy?” “How has it affected access to and the quality of education in the country?” I have asked these questions because the low education attainment, the unequal access and the low coverage among the poorer households primarily undermine the attainment of human security. As the study will show, there is also a problem of distributional consequences because of the lack of institutional capacity between the public and private schools. I put these questions to the Secretary General of the Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU), Mr Davidson Kuyateh. He said that:

“The policy is good for some members of society who can afford to send their children to private schools. It is bad for others, especially the poor, because they are unable to send their children to private schools due to high charges. This has led to inequality in access between the rich and the poor. The public school system is ill-equipped to provide quality education services” (Freetown, 5/12/2010).

I further asked Mr Kuyateh what should be done to address this problem. He said that:

“If this policy is to be effective, the Government should do two things. First, strengthen the public school system so that they become competitive with private schools. Second, to put in place a regulatory system that ensures private schools do not over-charge or exploit parents financially” (Freetown, 5/12/2010).

This supports Carnoy’s (1997) accusation that private schools have been known to raise fees to a level which restricts access to children of richer households and deprives those from poor backgrounds. The unregulated form of the market would allow private institutions to focus more on profit-making and less on providing quality education services in Sierra Leone.

Oxfam expressed similar concerns, noting that regulation of Non-State Providers (NSPs) is often weak, fragmented, and focused only on market entry rather than market performance. According to Emmett (2006:76):

“When there is no clear government policy framework for working with NSPs, the result is a patchwork of provision — a lottery for citizens, depending on where they live and what they can afford.”

An interviewee, who asked to be identified as a concern citizen, responded that:

“People are further prevented from accessing public education institutions because of high charges levied on them” (Makeni, 13/12/2010).

Poor children have been observed to drop out of school with greater frequency than the better-off. This is partly because the quality of schooling is inferior and partly because the unaffordability of public school charges. The Constitution and Education Act of Sierra Leone makes reference to free and compulsory basic (primary and junior secondary) education. Yet the contribution of households to education, according to the Country Sector Report in 2012, is very high. The report claimed that about 50% to 60% of total education expenditure in primary and secondary schools came from households. To ensure that all children are able to access basic education, the cost to individual households, particularly poor households, needs to be reduced or eliminated.

Many children, mostly girls and those from deprived families and living in countryside, still do not have access to primary education. The quality of teaching is not good and frequently drops in a period of rapid system expansion. For example, the Ministry of Education has reported that enrolment has increased since the free primary school education policy was introduced, but evidence suggests that, secondary schools are not well-equipped to accommodate the recent influx of primary graduates. Tertiary as well as technical and vocational education have little relevance to the labour market (MEST-SL).

I further asked the question in a focus group discussion in Freetown: “Why is the Government not investing in developing the public education infrastructure, making education affordable for the poor, supporting the training of teachers, and introducing better condition of service in order to improve the quality of services and to make education accessible for everyone?” The responses from the interviewees were:

“Lack of political will by the government and corruption.”

Many of the interviewees said that *“Sierra Leone is endow with natural resources, and that the Government should be able to use revenues from such resources to fund investment in education.”* (Makeni & Freetown, January, 2011)

Even though the opinions were mixed, these views are consistent with the literature review. A lecturer at N’jala University responded that:

“Private schools have qualified teachers, a better learning environment, small class sizes, and hence perform better in national examinations. In public schools this is the complete opposite” (Freetown, 13/12/2010).

Reimers (2000:119) concludes that, markets serve only to exacerbate existing inequalities because:

“The poor have less access to pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education, and they also attend schools of lower quality where they are socially segregated. Poor parents have fewer resources to support the education of their children, and they have less financial, cultural and social capital to transmit.”

I interviewed an Education Consultant, who works for UNICEF in Sierra Leone, and questioned her concerning the effects of the privatisation policy on human security. Her response reads:

“Sierra Leone is a poor country but with plenty of natural resources (gold, diamonds, iron ore and so on) and now having a prospect for petroleum production in the coming years. The lack of improved governance structures is making it hard for the Government to utilise revenues from these resources into social projects such as education. The privatisation policy introduced in education has made the delivery of education to become even more stratified. It only benefits a small number of rich people who can afford to send their children to private schools. This means, the vast majority of the people cannot afford to send their children to private schools. The effect of this is that there is one system of education for the rich and another for the poor. That is why UNICEF is working alongside the Government of Sierra Leone to support and improve public institutions, notably in education and health care” (Freetown, 13/01/2011).

This view supports the conclusion reached in the Education for All Global Monitoring Report in 2010 that, after analysing evidence from different sources about privatisation in the education sector, privatisation perpetuates marginalisation and leads to inequality. The report also claimed that:

“The sad reality about privatisation is that the poor or even the majority of working class parents cannot afford to send their children to fee-paying private schools, thereby perpetuating marginalisation instead of breaking it” (in Sinyolo, 2010:65).

This is consistent with the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) on the causes of the war in Sierra Leone (Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan, 2007). The gross disparities between the corrupt elites, and the poverty-stricken majority, greed and a lack of political will, all contributed to the outbreak of the war in 1991. In terms of education in Sierra Leone, as this study has shown, access still remains unequal.

11.4.2 Assessing the Effects of the Decentralisation Policy

Proponents of the decentralisation policy claimed that this policy would make the Local Authorities accountable to the local community and would encourage democratic participation of local communities in decision-making. The study argues that the decentralisation policy has failed to achieve this goal because of the lack of existing institutional capacity and resources available to Local Councils. Decentralisation is a process whereby decision-making authority over public schools is transferred from the Centre to Local Government. Its emphasis is on improving governance in the education system at the local level. Neo-liberals consider this as an efficient means of delivering education services. To assess its effects, the study asked the following questions: “What is your view about this policy?” “Is it successful in encouraging democratic practices in decision-making?” “Has it improved access to and the quality of education in the country?” “If not, why not?”

Many interviewees, both in the interview and focus group discussions, view this policy as a way of connecting and engaging with local people about the issues that affect their well-being. However, they claimed that, its effectiveness has been hindered by the following factors: lack of effective institutional capacity, inadequate resources, corruption and the lack of clarity in responsibility between Central and Local Government. This evidence suggests that the decentralisation policy has failed to provide the equitable and quality education

services which its proponents claimed it would achieve in Sierra Leone. This has a very serious consequences for the improvement of human security.

On the issue of the lack of clarity in responsibility between the Central and Local Government, the Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy in 2011 note that:

“Ambiguities and inconsistencies exist in critical overlapping areas of the Education and Local Government Acts of 2004. This is particularly in relation to the delineation of roles and responsibilities between District Education Officers (DEOs) and Local Councils. As a result, there have been considerable confusion, tensions and delays in the process of devolving education functions to Local Councils, which threaten institutional capacities for the delivery, support and monitoring of education at the District Level.”

I asked the Mayor of Makeni, Madam Sunkarie Kamara, how effective she considered the decentralisation process to have been. Her response was that:

“The devolution process is still on-going and not all functions were transferred to the Makeni District Council. Another major problem is that the reform was introduced without addressing the operational and structural issues that continue to affect the effective functioning of the Council. The Council is under-developed and lacks qualified staff, and this makes our job very difficult. After three decades of central governance, fixing these problems in a short period will be very difficult. So this will take some time and will require huge resources and continuous training for the councillors and other staff. I will therefore say not quite effective” (Makeni, 24/01/2011).

I further asked the Mayor how this policy has fostered citizens’ participation in issues of education. She replied that:

“Decision-making of how education should be provided is still controlled by the Ministry of Education and international partners. This, in my view, excludes the local community’s involvement in schools, the purpose for which the policy was introduced. A complete devolution of power and responsibility should be accompanied by the available resources in order to encourage community participation” (Makeni, 24/01/2011).

Another interviewee from the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (LGCD) said that:

“Decentralisation has led to more responsibilities for the Local Government Authorities but with less freedom and economic resources to execute these responsibilities effectively” (Freetown, 12/01/2011).

The IDEA (2006) have stated that democracy matters for human security because well-designed and inclusive political institutions, public participation and processes are essential for meeting human development objectives. Insecurity is linked to exclusion and lack of access to resources and power.

Other interviewees commented about the corrupt practices of the Local Government Officials noting that:

“Corruption hinders the effective functioning of the Council as scarce resources do not reach the schools because they are diverted into personal use. The monitoring mechanisms in place are not efficient.”

This weakness was also identified in management at both Central and Local Government levels (Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan, 2007:94).

These views not only support the thesis argument but also the UNDP conclusion in its evaluation of decentralisation policies in the context of achieving the MDGs. It stated that “Decentralisation does not inherently lead to greater participation, democracy or accountability.” The pre-requisites for successful decentralisation, as Willis and Khan (2009) have argued, should include sufficient local administrative capacity and a well-developed civil society which can lobby for change.

11.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a critical evaluation of neo-liberal reform in improving human security. It does this by assessing the effects of the reforms. What it shows is that the way in which the reform was introduced is anti-democratic. From a critical theory point of view, Cox and Horkheimer maintained that the reforms are seen as the strengthening of market enterprise and unequal power relationship between the citizens, government and the international institutions. This has a direct influence on the type of knowledge/policy

produced and it dis-empowers the marginalised and reinforces social inequalities. Cox, Habermas and Horkheimer considered this practice as destructive because it drives the population towards complicity. Cox, Habermas and Horkheimer therefore argued for an improvement in the structural principles of social co-existence that encourages the participation of citizens in decision-making.

The privatisation policy, as the evidence suggests, has led to an unequal access to education. This has created parallel systems of learning, in which elites and the middle class send their children to private schools, and the majority of the people, who are poor, send their children to public schools, mostly seen as inferior. The institutional and human resource capacity between the two is different. Private schools, in many respects, are seen to be better than public schools, which are ill-equipped. With decentralisation, the chapter shows that its effectiveness was hindered by the lack of institutional capacity, inadequate resources, corruption and the lack of clarity in responsibility between the Central and Local Government. In the next section, the study will also, critically evaluate the effects of the reforms in achieving health security.

Chapter 12

A Critical Evaluation of Neo-liberal Health Reforms in Sierra Leone

12.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the study seeks to do two things, namely:

- 3) To critically evaluate the effects of the neo-liberal health policies on human security and to assess the claims made by its proponents.
- 4) To analyse the reforms from a critical theory point of view as:
 - A form of power/knowledge and ideology,
 - Governance, understood as power by the national elite and unaccountable international institutions, and as
 - To whether it reduces the substance of democracy, as it takes control and the ability to influence policy-making away from ordinary people and places it in the hands of increasingly unaccountable private institutions, international institutions and governments who place the interests of those corporations and international financial institutions before those of their own populations.

As in the previous chapter, to present a more coherent structure of the evaluation process, the rest of the chapter is organised into three parts. The first introduces contemporary statistics on health and development in Sierra Leone. This provides a broader picture of the human security situation in the country from the angle of the health sector. Table 12.0 below shows key health policy documents that were reviewed in order to shed light on the effects of the reforms on human security. The second assesses the process by which the reforms were developed, and the third examines the effects of the reforms through the lens of critical theory to understand whether or not it achieves the goal of human security. This is followed by a chapter summary.

Table 12.0 Key Health Policy Documents Reviewed

Key Documents Reviewed	Year
Sierra Leone Global Health Initiative Strategy	2011
Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey	2008
African Health Observatory	See website
Sierra Leone Immunisation Vision and Strategy (SLIVS)	2006
Action for Global Health Report	2007
Sierra Leone Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015	2009
Sierra Leone Basic Packages of Essential Health Service	2010
Financing for Sierra Leone's Future: Health & Sanitation Budget Tracking	2012
Government of Sierra Leone Health Compact	2011
Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MIC)	2010
African Economic Outlook	2011

Source: Author's idea

The methodology used takes the form of an emancipatory practice development (EPD) approach discussed in Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3, which is set within the principles of “realistic evaluation” outlined by Pawson and Tilley in 1997. EPD emphasises the importance of participatory, collaborative and inclusive approaches to policy process (McCormack et al., 2007), and also with creating a culture that is not only sustainable but also in which developing practice is not dependent on any individual (Garbett & McCormack, 2004). In this way, Linklater (1996) opined that, critical theory 'judges social arrangements by their capacity to embrace open dialogue', so that it can 'envisage new forms of political community' that overcome exclusion and inequality. This approach, Linklater argues, allows for a systematic analysis of the social and contextual elements that influence the explication of outcomes associated with the neo-liberal reform.

The evaluation employed a wide range of methods, including literature reviews, interviews, focus group discussions and critical theory and it centres on specific themes. The questions centred on the processes, through which the reform was introduced and its effects on the citizens. Willis & Khan (2009:991) stated that, by focusing on the ways in which policies are created and developed, through the actions of individuals and institutions, is important in describing and explaining how ‘global’ processes are produced and implemented, and the

effects such processes have on local specificities. Therefore, as Gouldson and Murphy (1998) have observed, the effectiveness and efficiency of policies depends on how they are planned and implemented.

The evaluation is limited to the privatisation and decentralisation policies introduced in the health sector. Understanding the effects of these policies offers a way of addressing the concerns raised by Horkheimer, Habermas and Cox. They noted that, a critical evaluation of neo-liberalism must begin by exploring how people in society understand ideological manipulation of policies. For example, policies that are imposed instead of been developed by consensus, primarily led by international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF, and government officials co-opted by these institutions, which affect their human security. In doing so, the study seeks to answer the first research questions and the third below:

- 1) What are the processes by which the neo-liberal reform was introduced?
- 2) How successful was the reform in improving health security in Sierra Leone?

Again, research question four was answered in Chapter 6, sub-section 6.5. Critical theory has an emancipatory intent aiming to achieve social change towards a more just and equal society. It exposes the power relations, governance approach, the use of language and ideology that have created conditions of domination, subordination, marginalisation and inequality, which has, in many ways, seen as a description of the imposition of neo-liberal health policies (see Chapter 3). Political forces and structures, particularly the World Bank and the IMF, appear to leave the people without voice, and this, Critical Theorists argue, produces oppression and population inequalities. According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994), critical theory focuses on the critique and transformation of such forces and structures, relationships, and conditions that shape and constrain the development of social practices. It does this by examining them within their historical, social, cultural and political contexts. What this chapter shows is that the reforms have not been successful in improving health security in Sierra Leone.

The evaluation covers the period after the civil conflict in 2002. According to Periago (2012), human security focuses on the risk, dangers and threats that such practices poses to human development. Therefore, it seeks to provide an inclusive and a bottom-up approach in decision-making in which people participate equally in issues that affect their lives. Hence, as in Chapter 11, the aim of the evaluation process is three folds. First, to assess the success of the neo-liberal health policies to determine whether they actually work or not in achieving the goal of human security. Second, to provide an enhanced understanding of the

socio-economic development in the country as health is now viewed as a commodity. Third, to augment the operation of programs meant to serve the greatest needs of the community.

12.2 Contemporary Statistics on Health in Sierra Leone

This section examines the state of health and development in Sierra Leone, taken from the documentary and literature review. The purpose is to support the evidence obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions that will be shown in the second part of this chapter. Good health is an outcome of development and improved health is vital to workers' productivity as it creates and sustains rural livelihoods, and enhances education achievement (Bond & Dor, 2003). Similarly, occupation, food production, the environment, and other sectors all have a bearing on health status. The poor and vulnerable people everywhere recognise how much they value good health. A fit, strong body is a quality that permits deprived adults to work and children from less privilege background to learn. The poor have long recognised the link between good health and development (WHO, 2002). Therefore, health policy, as McGregor (2001) points out, consist of Government's decisions that affect cost, delivery, quality, accessibility and evaluation of health programs. The delivery of health services were traditionally funded by tax payers money, intended to improve the physical well-being of all members of the population, with particular emphasis on children, women, and the elderly. In the next section, the study provides an overview of health development in Sierra Leone.

12.2.1 Overview of Health Development

Evidence suggests that Sierra Leone is among the countries with the worst UNDP health indicators compared with the rest of the world. Life expectancy stands at 47 years, with infant mortality rate at 89 per 1,000 live births, under-five mortality rate at 140 per 1,000 live births, and a maternal mortality ratio of 857 per 100,000 births (SLDHS, 2008). Majority of the causes of illness and death in Sierra Leone according to the Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2008 are preventable, with most deaths attributable to nutritional deficiencies, pneumonia, anaemia, malaria, tuberculosis and now HIV/AIDS. For example, the Guardian Development Network (Sept., 2012) reported that:

"Existing health risks such as poor hygiene practices, unsafe water sources, and improper waste management are believed to have triggered outbreaks of diseases, and represent the

underlying cause for cholera outbreaks which has killed 327 people and infected more than 17,400 in Sierra Leone since February 2012."

The study notes that these factors are also believed to have triggered the outbreaks of the Ebola Virus disease (at the time of writing) in West Africa including Sierra Leone. Below is a table showing a summary of key health indicators for Sierra Leone in 2008 obtained from the Demographic and Health Survey.

Table 12.1 Summary of Key Health Indicators for Sierra Leone in 2008

Summary of key health indicators for Sierra Leone in 2008	
Key Indicators	2008
Total fertility rate	5.1
Infant mortality rate	89/1000 live births
Under-five mortality rate	140/1000 live births
Maternal mortality ratio	857/100,000 live births
Life expectancy (Male in years)	47.5
Life expectancy (Female in years)	49.4
Underweight prevalence with children under five years (%)	21.1 & 3.5
Stunning prevalence with children under five years (%)	36.4 & 20.6
DPT immunization coverage in %	54.6
Fully immunized children in %	30.2
Anaemia (Children between 6-59 months in %)	76
Anaemia (Women between 15- 49 years in %)	46
HIV prevalence (Adult between 15-49 years in %)	150

Source: Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (2008)

A study conducted by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2006 about Sierra Leone revealed that, 17% of children die before their first birthday, 25% die before they reach the age of five, and malaria was identified as the number one killer disease. Globally, Loaiza et al. (2008) reported that, over nine million children die each year before their fifth birthday, while half a million women die annually from pregnancy related causes. Children in Sierra Leone are malnourished. For example, the Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2008 reported that, 21% of children under the age of 5 were found to be underweight or too

thin for their age, 36% were stunted or too short for their age, and 10% were considered too thin for their height. The survey also noted that children in rural areas are more likely to be stunted than those in the urban areas.

In addition to the above, the Sierra Leone Global Health Initiative Strategy produced in 2011 identifies that, the major factor affecting the health status of the population in Sierra Leone is the lack of access to clean drinkable water, particularly related to diarrheal illnesses and acute respiratory infections. In rural communities, the Global Health Initiative Strategy estimated that up to 66% of people do not have access to safe drinking water. The country therefore suffers from epidemic outbreaks of diseases including yellow fever, cholera, lassa fever, meningitis, and the Ebola crisis in April, 2014. It was observed that it is the rural population that faces the highest risk of diseases with the most susceptible group been women, children and the elderly.

12.2.2 High-Charges for Access to Health Services

Sierra Leone has one of the highest maternal mortality rate in the world, with one in eight women facing death through pregnancy related causes during their lifetime, and patients pay amongst the highest charges to access health services in Africa (Amnesty International, 2009). The high cost represents a major barrier for most people because they cannot afford them. In fact, a significant proportion of Sierra Leoneans do not use both public and private health services because of the high cost. In 2009, the country has extremely low utilisation rate of 0.5% per person (MoHS-SL, 2011). Another review commissioned by the Ministry of Health in 2007 established that, even modest charges tends to exclude over 50% of the population from seeking health care (Ensor, Lievens & Naylor, 2008). The high cost undermines achieving the goal of human security.

In 1985, the World Bank published a major document: *"Paying for health services in developing countries: an overview"* in which de Ferranti (1985) argued the case for user-fees in health care. This was followed by a more developed neo-liberal policy in an official World Bank document in 1987 titled: *"Financing health care: an agenda for reform"*, which combined arguments for user-fees with a concerted argument for a reduced role for the state and increased reliance on market mechanisms and the private sector (in Lister, 2007:21). The view that patient pays for health services was asserted also in the Bamako Initiative, an agreement between African Ministers of Health, WHO and UNICEF in 1987, calling for greater community participation in managing and funding supplies of essential drugs. While it incorporated some positive goals, the Bamako policy of charging fees is now widely

acknowledged to have had hugely negative consequences on the population. User-fees mean that many people in the world's poorest countries simply do not seek treatment when they are ill, or delay getting help because they are poor and cannot afford to pay (Edwards, 2010). It can be fatal for conditions that require urgent attention, such as malaria in children. The high cost had resulted in millions of people not being able to access the health care they desperately need. Of those who do, the World Health Organisation estimated that 100 million people each year are driven into poverty by the extra costs (World Health Report, 2005). In 2010 the World Health Organisation reported that:

"Today, millions of people cannot use health services because they have to pay for the services at the point of delivery. Many of those who do use and pay for the services suffer financial hardship, or are even impoverished."

As James et al. (2005) explained, other studies have suggested that abolishing user-fees could prevent over 230,000 child deaths each year, across twenty African countries (cf. Edwards, 2010).

12.2.3 Government Expenditure on Health

The Government's budget allocated to the health sector has fallen significantly over the years. This has affected investment in health infrastructure, improving institutional capacity and the quality of health care delivery. In the early 1980's, Sierra Leone's health expenditure was 2.5% of GNP compared with other developing countries, where spending was 7% of GNP (SLIVS, 2007). In 1991/92, the budgetary allocation was 4.3% of the overall national budget and only 0.4% of GNP. In 1995, total recurrent expenditure in the health sector went up to 9.8%, and in 1999, it increased to 10.8%. The expenditure on health in 2003 was 8.3%, in 2004 it was 4.8%, and in 2005 it was 6.1% respectively. This data shows that the budgetary allocation to the health sector is non-linear and has affected the quality of health services provided. At the Abuja meeting of African Heads of government in 2002, all 53 countries in the African Union made a pledge to devote 15% of their national budgets to health, but few countries have actually come close to being able to commit this sum (SLIVS, 2007). Other budgetary allocations to the health sector in recent years are shown in the table below.

Table 12.2 Sierra Leone's Health Budget as a % of Total Government Expenditure

Year	Health budget as a % of total govt.	Abuja target (15%)
2009	7.5	15
2010	7.4	15
2011	11	15
2012	7.4	15

Source: World Vision, Budget Advocacy Network, Save the Children & Oxfam (2012)

Despite the Sierra Leone Government announcing the prioritisation of the health sector, declared the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) in 2011 a leading project, and constantly re-instated its promise to the Abuja Target, there has been a significant decline in health spending as a percentage of the total national budget. A report compiled by World Vision, Budget Advocacy Network, Save the Children & Oxfam in 2012 claimed that in 2009, 7.5% of the total national budget (inclusive of recurrent, development expenditure, and transfers to the Local Councils) was allocated to the health sector, and decreased to 7.4% in 2010. In 2011, the report revealed that the health sector received a significant increase of 11% of the total national budget. The rise was due to the introduction of the FHCI specifically aimed at pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children under the age of five years. However, in 2012 it was considerably reduced to 7.4%, below the 2009 level. The report however warns that, whilst it recognised that the government has other priorities to fulfil, these reductions in spending in the health sector inhibit the goal of achieving health security, given that the FHCI was a flagship project.

The Action for Global Health Report (2007) claimed that, in 2006, only about a third of sub-Saharan African countries were allocating 10% or more of their national budgets to the health sector, 38% of countries were assigning 5% to 10%, while 29% have allocated less than 5%, despite the Abuja target of 15% spending on health. Rich countries are also far off-track in assisting developing countries to increase access to health care. The report stated that at the Gleneagles Summit in 2005, G8 leaders promised to support African partners willing to ensure free access to basic health care in order to reduce mortality among those most at risk of dying from preventable causes, particularly women and children. To achieve this objective, several countries set targets of spending 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) on aid to poorer countries by 2015. To date, as Berkhout & Oostingh (2008) claimed, only five countries have attained this goal. The disjointed, uncoordinated, and irregular aid currently given to the health sector adds to existing problems.

A study by World Vision, Budget Advocacy Network, Save the Children & Oxfam in 2008 also recognised that, while some progress was made in the health sector, particularly in the area of maternal and child health, there are still many challenges which needs to be addressed. The study noted that, it is critical for the Government to assume greater financial responsibility for the provision of health services, and decrease reliance on donor support. Donor funding for the health and sanitation sector should be seen as an extra support to domestic investment, and not a reason for Government to redirect domestic resources to other areas, the study claims. With growing revenues from mining, tourism and agriculture, the Sierra Leone Government should increase investment in the health sector, lessening donor dependence, and ensuring progress towards the achievement of the health related Millennium Development Goals. The study suggests also that the Government should outline a clear timetable for achieving the Abuja target of 15% by 2015, with an immediate increase from 2013. For sanitation, this should involve increasing the allocation for sanitation to 0.3% of GDP by 2013, moving towards achieving the 1% of GDP by 2015, as committed in 2012.

12.2.4 Health Infrastructure

The private sector is underdeveloped compared with other countries in the sub-region such as Ghana and Kenya and it provides curative care for in-patients and out-patients on a fee-for-service basis (SL-NHSSP, 2010-2015). Private health facilities as the study notes in Chapter 10, function under the authority of individual owners and/or boards of directors, mainly in urban areas. The rich tend to use private health facilities more than the poor. The table below shows the distribution of health service providers in Sierra Leone.

Table 12.3 Number of health infrastructures in all 13 District in Sierra Leone

District	Government					Mission		Private		NGOs	Total
	CHC	CHP	MCHP	Clinics	Hospitals	Hospitals	Clinics	Hospitals	Clinics	Clinics	
Bo	23	12	50	1	1	1	6	0	11	3	108
Bombali	16	20	49	0	2	2	3	1	3	0	96
Bonthe	9	9	20	0	2	1	2	0	0	2	45
Kailahun	9	34	12	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	59
Kambia	11	8	31	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	54
Kenema	21	17	63	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	111
Koinadugu	12	6	33	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	54
Kono	11	15	46	0	1	0	1	0	4	4	82
Moyamba	12	6	56	1	2	0	5	0	0	1	83
Port Loko	11	21	55	0	2	1	4	0	1	0	95
Pujehun	14	10	25	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	50
Tonkolili	9	8	65	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	87
Western Area	20	10	15	7	12	2	11	2	23	3	105
Total	178	176	520	11	30	11	38	3	45	17	1020

Source: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MIC) in 2010

Table 12.3 shows a network of health facilities. It consist of 968 peripheral health facilities which are made-up of Community Health Centres (CHCs), Community Health Posts (CHPs), Maternal and Child Health Posts (MCHPs), and 44 hospitals (30 government-owned and the rest owned by private and mission institutions), while Non-Governmental Organisations owned 17 clinics in the country. The peripheral health facilities and hospitals controlled by the Government are inadequately equipped and under-staffed, and provide only limited services (MoHS-BPEHSSL, 2010).

12.3 Evaluating the Process by Which the Reforms Were Developed

In this section, the study shows how the health reform was developed and introduced and what people think about it in Sierra Leone. Steger & Roy (2010) described the reform as new rules and conditions for Africa's economic development. The aim is to understand whether the reform was imposed upon the government or whether it was locally developed through a democratic approach. Other scholars may argue that as long as the decisions are passed by legislators as elected representatives, thus it is considered democratic. This study disagree with this view and argues that although this is necessary it not a sufficient condition as much wider consultation process or debate (inclusive process) about societal issues is needed. This section seeks also to understand whether the policies are ideological and was instituted as a way of controlling or subordinating people to a different mode of governance.

It is intended to contribute in answering the first research question: “*What are the processes by which the reforms were developed?*” The evidence from this study suggests that the reforms have subjected the delivery of health care to the idea of the free market, imposed by the World Bank and the IMF. The lack of democratic practices in developing these policies has been identified by Critical Theorists as, excluding and strengthening the marginalisation of the poor, because their voices are not part of the decision-making process. The main indicator that I have used to assess the policy processes is citizens’ participation in decision-making which affects the delivery of health services. The study showed in Chapters 3 and 6 the importance of citizens’ participation in policy-making in achieving the objective of human security. Therefore, this section is limited to the policy processes. To shed light on the research questions that was set out, I asked the following questions:

1. What is your view about the way in which the reforms were developed and introduced?
2. Do you think this approach to policy formulation is effective? If no, why?
3. What do you think the Government should do in order to develop effective policies?

While responses from the interviews and focus group discussions were mixed, a significant number of interviewees, however, drew attention to the undemocratic way in which the policies were developed, which they say, is a threat to human security. As the evidence suggests, 88% of interviewees said that the process by which health policies were developed is not democratic as it was imposed by the international institutions, and 85% claimed that Government has no independence in developing health policies locally. This reinforces the notion that, political power does not reside solely in the nation-state, rather, it is controlled by powerful global institutions, themselves a part of the process of global governance as described by Cox throughout his work (Rose, 1999). Many of the interviewees said that it deprives them (as citizens) from influencing the decisions on health care policies. It also support Cox thesis, which highlights the unequal power relations between the political elites, the World Bank, the IMF and the citizens. I asked a senior official from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation regarding the way in which the reforms were introduced. The response was that:

“There is lack of transparency on how health care policies are developed and this is a major problem. The consultation process is limited and the sector is guided by international institutions, particularly the World Bank, the IMF and other donor organisations working

in the health sector. Before a reform is carried out, the intended policies should be open to debate by all stakeholders and not only a few people.” (Freetown, 19/01/2011).

I further asked what effects this has in delivering quality health services to the population. The official said that:

“Such a process is not democratic and excludes the participation of major stakeholders’ in decision-making that concerns how health care should be provided” (Freetown, 19/01/2011).

This supports Horkheimer (1978:51) view that, “Such an approach makes people and state to succumb to the rule of increasingly repressive forms of political and economic organisation.” In short, decisions are made by technocratic experts in a way that takes decision-making out of the hands of citizens.

Another interviewee commented that:

“While these policies are dictated to the government, compliance mechanisms are also instituted to ensure that the reforms are implemented. This strategy guarantees the release of funds provided to the establishment and the health sector” (Freetown, 14/01/2011).

Similar responses were also made by majority of the interviewees in the focus group discussions and interviews held in Freetown and Makeni. Eddy (2006:6) stated that, with neo-liberal governance have come new forms of social control, surveillance, and pressures towards complicity. This, he argues, has placed enormous external pressures on domestic governments to conform to an international agenda of ‘good governance’. Such forms of social control, surveillance and pressure to comply with international dictate has provided critical theory with a platform from which to understand how power operates in actual governing arrangements, as Griffin (2007) has pointed out.

What this shows is that the imposition of these policies by the international institutions represents the institutionalisation of ideology (in particular neo-liberalism) in health policy. According to Steger & Roy (2010), ideologies are presented into fairly simple truth-claims that encourage people to act in certain ways. They argued that these claims are assembled to justify certain political interests and to defend or challenge dominant power structures. From a critical theory point of view, it reinforces the use of power as an instrument of oppression

or exploitation by distorted representations of reality at various levels. In supporting Cox view, Guess (1981) wrote that “At the very heart of the critical theory of society is its criticism of ideology.” Guess explained that ideology is what prevents the ordinary people in society from correctly perceiving their true situation and real interests, and he said “if people are to free themselves from social repression, they must rid themselves of ideological illusion” (pp. 2-3).

12.4 Evaluating the Neo-liberal Health Reforms

In this section, the study assesses the reforms to understand whether or not they were successful in improving human capital through the delivery of accessible and quality health care. It specifically focuses on three main policies discussed in the literature in Chapter 10, namely: privatisation and the introduction of user-fees, and decentralisation. It is intended to answer the third research question: “*How effective was the reform in improving health security in Sierra Leone?*” The section is therefore divided into two parts, each discussing the effects of one of the policies mentioned above.

Neo-liberals view health as a ‘commodity’ and citizens as ‘consumers’ in the market, where there is choice of health service providers. According to Nunes (2008), health is a form of human capital, and can be defined by the longevity and physical well-being of an individual. The security of people is therefore related to their quality of life and, the threats to their security are linked to a number of social and economic issues, including the unequal access to health services (Iqbal, 2006:633). Social policy decisions require an understanding of the factors that contribute to the creation of health inequalities, and Nunes argues that, unequal access to health services continue to be a persistent and growing policy problem in most countries, including Sierra Leone. A fundamental requirement in the development of a social policy to counteract or control such differences is a good understanding of the factors contributing to the creation of health inequalities (Jones and Rice, 2005). This section aim to convey the views of interviewees, who see the introduction of the health reforms as undermining their human security. Their experience would make an important contribution to health policy. As a result, the bulk of the data for this section came from interviews and focus group discussions.

12.4.1 Assessing the Effects of the Privatisation Policy

The goals of the privatisation policy, proponents argue, are to encourage competition and improve the efficiency and quality of health services provided. According to Balasooriya et

al. (2008), privatisation involves three main intertwined dimensions: ownership, competition and regulation and requires that, substantial emphasis is given to proper institutional framework if the reforms are to be successful. They argued that, this would help to establish good governance practices that ensure transparency and accountability in the process.

The responses from the interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the privatisation policy has led to unequal access to health services. It has therefore failed to improve human security. The answers centred around three themes, namely: inequitable access to health services, private health providers are very expensive and people die of health conditions because they cannot afford to pay the high cost. The following questions were asked: “What is your view about this policy?” “How has it affected access to and the quality of health services in the country?” I asked these questions because, the statistics on health, shown in the first part of this chapter is appalling. Inequitable access to and the low coverage of health services among the poorer households does not only have distributional consequences because of the lack of institutional capacity between the public and private health care providers, but it also primarily undermines human security. In responding to the above questions, an interviewee said that:

“This policy benefits those who can afford to pay the high cost to access private health care, where they receive better services. While the poor, who are unable to afford the increase fees, are left with no option but to use the public health service, which lacks qualified staff, medical equipment and drugs compared with private institutions” (Makeni, 17/01/2011).

In the focus group discussions, most interviewees responded that:

“Private health insurance is used by those who have secured jobs and the rich. Hence, poor people, who don’t have secured jobs are excluded because of the uncertainty in the payment of their insurance premium. The Government’s intended Social Health Insurance Scheme would only provide a limited package of health care services.”

This support Unger et al. (2008) view that, private health insurance may not have the expected results according to neo-liberal doctrine, and on the contrary, it may increase unfairness in financing and unequal access to quality health care.

Most of the interviewees acknowledged that private health providers provide better health services than the public health institutions, but are inaccessible by many people because of

their socio-economic status. For example, Phelan et al. (2004) stated that socio-economic status seems to be a central cause of health inequalities, as it is related to many different forms of social exclusion or discrimination and too many different types of disease or disability.

According to Nanda (2002), evidence relating to the imposition of user-fees not only deter the poorest from accessing health care services, but also discriminate most heavily against women. Nanda argued that:

“Not only do the charges create a differential impact on the utilisation of health services by men compared with women, but they also affect the usage of key services by women themselves thus creating inequality in access to these services. The fall-off in utilisation of prenatal and maternal health care services is often dramatic when fees are introduced. Fees are often supplemented by informal or hidden costs, which can mean that an expectant mother, for example may receive minimal, if any, care in childbirth even if she has paid the user-fee.”

Willis & Khan (2009:28) argued that, as user-fees rises, without appropriate safety nets for the poorest and most marginalised people in society, the reforms would exacerbate inequalities within what is already the most income-unequal region in the world. Other commentators have argued that charging fees for service at the point of delivery has meant that many of those most in need of care do not access the health services because of the financial burden placed on their already meagre subsistence livelihoods. Therefore, the impacts of the reforms need to be examined within the broader context of existing health care provision, poverty levels and capacity in the country (to both manage and provide health care services). An official at the Ministry of Health and Sanitation responded that:

“We have seen a rise in the contracting of services to certain private providers, recommended by key donor organisation to implement health programmes in the country. One example of this is the contract given to ‘Options Consultancy Ltd from the UK,’ to provide technical and management expertise in the implementation of the Government’s Reproductive and Child Health Strategic Plan. Their staffs are paid very good salary and they are given reasonable allowances compared with what our local staffs receives. Those who actually benefits from such contracts are the foreign staffs while less money is been spent on improving the health service” (Freetown, 17/01/2011).

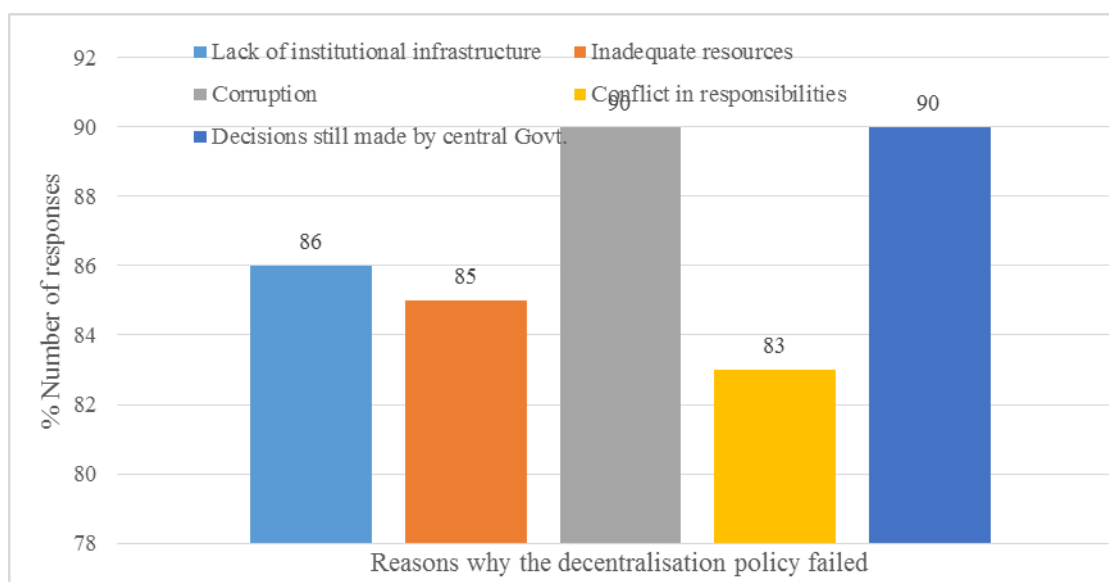
Hence, the privatisation policy has a very serious consequences in achieving the goal of human security because majority of the population are poor and are unable to afford the high cost of accessing both the public and private health services.

12.4.2 Assessing the Effects of the Decentralisation Policy

In seeking to achieve “Health for All” as the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared in the Alma Ata Declaration of 1978, decentralisation and marketisation have been increasingly adopted as the key processes through which this would be achieved. Proponents of the decentralisation policy claimed that it would enable Local Authorities to be accountable to the local community and it would increase community involvement in health care delivery. Decentralisation has been regarded as a key element in promoting equal access to health services while also reducing the role of the Central Government in decision-making. Other commentators argue that decentralisation is necessary to produce an optimum combination of top-down and bottom-up planning. However, Reilly (1990) argue that, conventional local government is not always good at encouraging other kinds of participation that can be beneficial to government health services, such as the mobilisation of community groups in providing inputs or the involvement of client groups in the management of facilities.

As in the previous chapter, the evidence also supported the claim that, decentralisation policy did not improve citizens’ participation in decision-making, and hence, access to and the quality of health services provided remains inadequate. Again, the reasons for this failure according to interviewees was that, the Government is still in-charge of making decisions, there is lack of existing institutional capacity available to the Local Councils, inadequate resources, corruption and conflict in responsibilities between the Central and Local Government. Ninety percent of interviewees said that decision-making is still centralised, 86% cited the lack of institutional capacity, 85% mentioned inadequate resources, 90% stated corruption and 83% revealed conflict in job responsibilities were responsible for the failure of the decentralisation policy. These are shown in the figure below:

Figure 12.0: Reasons Why the Decentralisation Policy Failed



Source: from the interviews and focus group discussions conducted in 2010/11

Decentralisation is a process whereby decision-making authority over public health institutions is transferred from the Central to the Local Government. Its emphasis is on improving governance in the health system at the local level. Therefore, to assess its effects, the study asked the following questions: “What is your view about this policy?” “Has it been successful in encouraging democratic practices in decision-making?” “Has it improved access to and the quality of health service in the country?” “If not, why not?” “What do you think should be done?”

An official from the Ministry of Health responded that:

“The major problem we are facing in this Ministry is that, the Government is still in control of decision-making concerning the provision of health services and not all functions has been transferred to the Local Councils. This, in my view, is not decentralisation. The purpose for which the policy was introduced is to enable Local Authorities to determine, in collaboration with the local community, the kind of health services to be provided and how it will be provided and at what cost. The Local Councils and the local communities have not been involved in decision-making that affect the way in which health services are provided. Another problem is the insufficient funds allocated to the Local Council. This make it quite challenging in providing better health services to our people” (Freetown, 10/01/2011).

I further asked what should be done to address these problems, the official stated that:

“There should be a complete transfer of decision-making authority to Local Councils and budget allocation should be increased if the provision of quality health services is to be achieved. Revenues generated from taxes and through the charges levied on the use of health services are inadequate to address the short-fall in budget allocated. Only few people can afford to pay health charges as the majority are poor. However, we have seen a significant increase in Government revenues, for example from mining over the last few years, but it does not reflect on the funds allocated to Councils in providing better health services (Freetown, 10/01/2011).

To investigate this further, I asked another senior official from the Freetown City Council concerning his view about the decentralisation policy in the health sector. This is what the official said:

“We still do not have complete powers to make decisions about health, education and so on, and we also lack the resources to run the council effectively. Decision-making is still a top-down process, and this excludes us as elected councillors and the citizens from making our voices heard. However, civil society organisations are leading the campaign in applying pressure on the Government to fully transfer decision-making and responsibilities to the Councils” (Freetown, 14/01/2011).

In 2007, the World Bank acknowledges that decentralisation came with increased responsibilities for the municipal authorities but often without the freedom and economic resources to deliver. It advocates that effective decentralisation requires high levels of local discretion as well as local accountability. Without adequate discretionary power, the World Bank argues that local officials lack legitimacy in the eyes of the electorate they are supposed to represent.

Another concern citizen also expressed the view that:

“The local community’s involvement in the provision of health service is not effective. The cost of accessing health services remain very high and the quality of services provided in the public hospitals and clinics very poor. The Government is reluctant to relinquish decision-making power and more resources to the local authorities because it wanted to

continue with the corrupt practices of misappropriating funds provided to the health sector for their own personal interest” (Makeni, 21/01/2011).

According to Willis & Khan (2009:12), community involvement is often encouraged through the setting up of consultative processes, whereby community members are able to respond to local health initiatives or even contribute to their development. Similar views were also expressed in the focus group discussions held in Makeni and Freetown. Human security aim to empower individuals through the participation of citizens in decision-making, however, from a critical theory point of view, the continued top-down decision-making process by the Government revealed the existence power relations at work in neo-liberal governance, with some elite groups at the national and global level mostly deciding policy results and goals in a way which mirrors the benefits of private corporations, donors and international financial institutions.

In 2006, the Ministry of Health in Sierra Leone introduced a comprehensive plan for devolving central government functions to the Local Councils as well as the sequencing of the devolution process. It includes establishing a decentralised public financial management system with the aim of improving public financial management. A special financial management unit was created in the Ministry of Finance. The World Bank, the EU, UNDP, DFID and other donors are facilitating the devolution of power to Local Authorities and the participation of the citizenry in the development process. The budget is now presented in the form of a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF). Budgetary Oversight Committees have been created to assist the determination of budgetary priorities. The study observed that this strategy has not yielded the required results.

12.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a critical evaluation of the effects of the neo-liberal health reforms. What is clear from the analysis is that the reforms has not been successful in achieving the goal of health security in Sierra Leone. The consequences of the privatisation and decentralisation policy have resulted in the following: citizens have been excluded from taking part in decision-making, highlighting the unequal power relations, which critical theory argues, inhibits their human security. The high charges by the public and private providers have also led to unequal access to health services because poor people are unable to afford the cost. The services provided by private providers are better than those in the

public sector, but it often results in inequality and exclusion, which deny the fact that health is a basic human right.

Finally, the chapter also shows that critical theory enables us to see neo-liberalism as an ideological framework, which underpins global governance in providing health care. However, the study notes that it constrains the health policy options of national governments including Sierra Leone. The reforms have created a strategy in which private organisations are able to make profit, and also contracting foreign organisations, recommended by international institutions including the World Bank and the IMF, as their proponents labelled it “*to support the Government in delivering better health care services to its people*”. In reality, this is not the case, as the study has shown, the beneficiaries of the reforms were staffs from the contracted organisations because they are being paid very good salaries and live in luxury in these poor countries, and people who own private health clinics or hospitals because they are making profit. In essence, it is majority of the people who suffers because they are unable to access better health facilities when they are ill. The next chapter discusses the conclusions of the study.

Chapter 13

Conclusions

13.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study and it proffers a number of comments on the following: first, the effects of the reforms; second, human security as an alternative development approach; third, the usefulness of critical theory; fourth, reflections on neo-liberalism as a globalised phenomenon; fifth, reflections of this case-study for other post-conflict countries; sixth, contributions made to knowledge; seventh, recommendations for policy-makers, government and other education and health consultants; and finally, avenues for future research.

13.2 Summary of the Effects of the Reforms

The gap that this study seeks to address is that, not many studies have linked neo-liberal reforms and its effects to the idea of human security, particularly in the case of Sierra Leone, a post-conflict country. It was on this basis that the study was undertaken by conducting a critical evaluation to understand the consequences of the current neo-liberal reforms (market-oriented policies) on two major aspects of human security, namely: education and health. The aim of the evaluation process is three fold. First, to assess the effectiveness of the reforms to determine whether they were actually successful or not in achieving the goal of human security. Second, to provide a better understanding of the socio-economic development related to education and health as they are now viewed as a commodity. Third, to improve the performance of its delivery intended to assist the greatest needs of the community by putting forward an alternative approach to the neo-liberal agenda.

Two major reforms were adopted and implemented after the civil conflict in 2002, namely: privatisation and decentralisation policy. The overarching research question was to examine *“To what extent the reforms have been successful in inhibiting or achieving the goal of human security in Sierra Leone.”* To answer this question, four supplementary questions were investigated and the outcomes summarised below:

The first question was: *“What was the process by which the neo-liberal reforms were introduced?”* Although domestic circumstances, by this I mean the poor state of the education and health sector, called for the reforms, it was clear from the study (as shown in Chapters 11 and 12) that international institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF, significantly influenced the thinking of the government and policy-makers. As Cox (1983) argues, these institutions encapsulate and give voice to the ‘universal norms’ that are a part

of the “neo-liberal ideology” of a hegemonic world order. The process was viewed by interviewees as undemocratic and has excluded many people from making their voices heard in policy documents. In Chapter 3, Arce (2006:30) described the concept of marketisation, by which citizens are excluded from decision-making that affects their lives as: “Placing societal actors in the role of passive recipients of state initiatives, incapable of contesting or modifying the implementation of market reforms.” The study agrees with this view.

The evidence support Apple et al. (2008:9) view that, states are no longer able to function independently in determining policies that are best suited for their countries. This issue was raised in the work of Habermas and Cox and is central to critical theory because it challenges the prevailing structures of power and injustice in political organisations. Power is seen by governing elites and their bureaucracies as influential in developing and spreading a particular kind of knowledge/ideology. Because of this ideology reinforces the use of power as a system of oppression and exploitation. Control has now been taken over by international institutions, which are increasingly dominant because of the system of global governance that has emerged since the end of the Cold War, as Cox illustrates clearly. By so doing, they have undermined the authority of the state in poor countries such as Sierra Leone. Furthermore, Horkheimer, Habermas and Cox saw this not as a formal or static process, but to a degree, contingent on existing power structures and arrangements that continue to shape development agendas in poor countries, and have refashioned the provision of education and health care as part of the wider services sector.

Cox attributed the influence of the international institutions to the existence of power structures that have aligned the state to serve the interest of the hegemonic bloc of political and economic elites largely rooted in the core states of the current world order (Europe, North America and Japan). This, in turn, has been underpinned by the development of neo-liberalism as the global ideology of ruling political and economic elites. The two-dimensional approach, which Lukes associates with the work of Bacharach & Baratz in 1970, dealt with potential decisions, posited by various agents and groups, which do not make it onto the decision-makers’ agenda (see Chapter 5). When these non-decisions or suppressed possibilities are taken into account, Lukes said, the evidence tends to point more in the direction of ‘elite’ theories of power, that is, power concentrated in the hands of a specific group or groups. This creates power asymmetry to the people, government and the international institutions. While proponents of the reforms have failed to acknowledge this anti-democratic practice in policy-making in the literature, in essence the evidence suggests that the reforms were imposed as both Lukes and Critical Theorists suggest.

The anti-democratic manner in which the reforms were introduced was also criticised by Ross & Gibson (ed., 2007). They argue that neo-liberalism works as a political system, one in which there is formal and real democracy, but in which the citizens remain spectators, diverted from any meaningful participation in decision-making. According to Habermas, the imposition of any form of ideology restricts or limits processes of communication and undermines the conditions of success, by which he means, open and democratic communication within them. He considers the conditions for discussion as most important for providing an environment within which discussion and deliberation will lead to genuine consensus rather than simply being dominated by power, the antithesis of democracy. In Sierra Leone nothing like these conditions exist with regard to discussions over health and education policy, as the interviews and focus group discussions made clear.

The second and third questions were: *“How successful were the reforms in improving education security in Sierra Leone?”* *“How successful were the reforms in improving health security in Sierra Leone?”* The objectives of the privatisation policy, proponents argue, are to encourage competition by giving people more choice, improve the quality of education and health services, and reduce cost. However, evidence from this study demonstrated that this policy has led to the marginalisation and unequal access to better education and health services by the poor. It has therefore undermined the prospect of achieving the goal human security. Privatisation, as the study revealed, has a “distributional effect” as it affect those from poor socio-economic background. The institutional capacity of private schools/private health providers is stronger than those of public schools/public health institutions. Private providers have been known to raise fees to a level which restricts access to children of richer households and deprives those from poor backgrounds. Poor children have been observed to drop out of school with greater frequency than the better-off. This was attributed to the inferior quality of schooling in public institutions and because people are unable to afford the high charges levied in public and private school/health institutions. The Government’s intended Basic Package of Essential Health Services would limits access to those with severe health problems because of the treatment it offers. It was also noted in Chapters 11 and 12 that, the unregulated form of the market allows private institutions to focus more on profit-making and less on providing quality education and health services.

Proponents of decentralisation policy claimed that it would transfer power and resources in order to strengthen Local Governments and communities, make Local Authorities accountable to the local communities and encourage democratic participation of local communities in decision-making. The study departed from this claim and argues that the

decentralisation policy was unsuccessful in improving accountability and encouraging democratic practices that are vital in achieving the goal of human security. The reasons for this failure, as the study illustrated in Chapters 11 and 12, was because the policy was introduced without adequate attention to the structural changes needed for it to function successfully. Other factors include the lack of institutional capacity, inadequate resources available to Local Councils, corruption and the lack of clarity in responsibility between Central and Local Government. These reasons support the UNDP conclusion in its evaluation of decentralisation policies in the context of achieving the MDGs that *“Decentralisation does not inherently lead to greater participation, democracy or accountability.”* Willis and Khan (2009) stated that the pre-requisites for successful decentralisation should include sufficient local administrative capacity and a well-developed civil society.

Decentralisation creates a challenging paradox for governments, Millar Wood (2008) argues. She said, decentralisation requires the state to simultaneously retain control of education and health care policy and standards of quality that give it legitimacy, while relinquishing control of the implementation of its policies to lower levels of government where it has less control. This creates conflict of interest by relinquishing control but retaining decision-making authority. This makes it very difficult for local authorities to exercise complete control and decision-making power over the affairs of their communities. The advantages of decentralisation may be weakened when Local Governments lack technical capabilities, resources, and the power to make decisions.

The fourth question was: *“To what extent can the two, neo-liberal reforms and human security, be seen as complementary in achieving the objective of human security?”* This question was answered in Chapter 6, sub-section 6.5 in which the contradictions between the two was examined. The study argues that, although the goal of human security seemed incompatible with those of neo-liberalism, the human security objective also has connections with market-based reforms. In practice, human security and market reforms relies on the state to achieve its goals, however critical it might be of them in theory. This is because, neo-liberalism depends on a strong state and on effective legal institutions as its proponents claimed, to ensure freedom and equality. At the same time, Carson (2000) observed that, state governments have significantly increased expenditures on ‘law and order’ areas while strengthening regulatory arrangements governing social and economic processes. Human security requires also the state’s commitment to achieve its goal.

Furthermore, in Chapter 4, the study discusses the profound implications that state political practices have in achieving the goal of human security. It also underscores growing and pervasive concerns that has to do with poverty and the lack of access to better education and health services. Present policies are so narrowly and instrumentally conceived, and over-determined by economic concerns that they impede the development of social autonomy (Maddock, 1999:49). In concluding, therefore, the introduction of the reforms has produced some winners and losers. On the one hand, the winners as the study shows, are the large corporations which increases their profitability, and staffs from private organisations contracted by the Government who received high salaries to provide education and health services. On the other hand, the losers are the poor citizens who are unable to access private education and health services because they cannot afford the high cost. To address the problems raised in section 13.2, the study offers an alternative development strategy, which is human security. The next section provides a brief account of this approach.

13.3 Human Security: Alternative Development Strategy

As shown in Chapter 6, human security is a people-centred and a bottom-up approach that addresses the concerns of human susceptibility. Its integration into policy and practices would be useful not only as an evaluative framework but in assessing education and health outcomes, and the way in which public policies are formulated. The study shows that human security and critical theory are congruent. This is important because they are both concerned with human emancipation, and have a world-wide traditions about what people need. They believe that the key to emancipation is for people to have the opportunity to take control of their lives. Their specific focus is on the interests of humanity as a whole by empowering them. Empowerment according to McCormack (2008) is understood as giving political power and control to the citizens and establishing clear lines of accountability and responsibility. As Cox (1981) said, the biggest task of emancipating people today is to challenge the domination of neo-liberal agendas and ensure that the transformation of structures of political economy is in the interest of the marginalised and the poor, which is exactly the focus of human security. Equality is a key component for social justice and is considered an important pre-requisite for both social development and human security. The concept of equality as O'Brien & Leichenko (2007) have observed is associated with freedom from bias or favouritism, and entails outcomes that are perceived as fair to everyone. The study illustrates also that health and education insecurity ravages people's lives. The concept of human security advances ethical, moral and legal guidance for policy-makers.

Robinson (on WHO Bulletin, 2007) argues that human right is the closest thing we have to a shared value system for the world. The study agrees with Robinson that we should take them not simply as shared goals, but as legal obligations and policy-making tools that can assist those in-charge with making complex decisions.

13.4 The Usefulness of Critical Theory

The advantage of using critical theory is because of its usefulness in understanding the concept of power/knowledge, ideology and governance as set out by Cox in his work on global governance. It enables the study to make sense of the hidden power relations in the way knowledge/policy is constituted. This study examines the connection between the Sierra Leone Government and other actors such as the World Bank, the IMF and so on. The reason for this is because Sierra Leone is embroiled in a relationship in which it cannot act as it chooses, but act within a framework constructed by these actors (international institutions). That is the point of drawing from critical theory because it talks about this nexus. In doing so, it increases our awareness and understanding of social problems. It therefore produces different lenses through which to understand social reality. It unravel the relationship between power and knowledge, the notion of a discourse as an ideological framework that underpins neo-liberalism, which has become embedded in public policy now seen as normal, universal and if you like, the only policy option available.

As illustrated in chapter 3, critical theory is derived from a socio-political and emancipatory traditions, in which knowledge is not seen as discovered by objective inquiry but is acquired through critical discourse and debate. Hence, it has a major significance in comprehending the practicality of policies, which are increasingly being promoted to strengthen the opinions of people through discussions and dialogues, now thought by neo-liberals as consumers of education and health care services, and the necessity to increase their involvement in policy evaluation and development. Critical theory also takes an anti-positivist view about society and uses a critique method in order to transform current structures, relationships, and conditions that shape and constrain the development of social practices by examining them within their historical, social, cultural and political contexts. It is instrumental and suitable for the investigation of individual and group independent practices.

Cox work on hegemony and global governance has provided us a useful way of conceptualising and investigating the political and ideological dimensions of discursive practices. For example, there are two central issues that Cox was particular about: first, institutions encapsulate and give voice to the ‘universal norm’ that are part of the common

sense ideology of a hegemonic world order; and second, because of this, politicians and top civil servants tend to be recruited from amongst the establishment because of the very nature of the state itself, and the wider structural constraint within which it operates. Therefore, Cox argues that power and interest have a direct influence on the type of knowledge/policy produced. Power and interest have become an agent of transformation of the human life, subjecting people to a particular mode of governance. These are subjects that Horkheimer and Habermas are also very critical about and critical theory helps us to understand this complication.

Another fundamental aspect of critical theory is that it also serves as a qualitative approach, and hence comes a way of critiquing quantitative method. The reason for this is because quantifying social relations is inherently problematic as it treat the social world just like the natural world. For example, just the same way as studying rocks, animals and so on, and that is not what human beings are. You cannot study social relations this way because there are all kinds of complicated phenomena at work that has to do with emotions, motivations and in particular, power an ideology that this thesis focuses upon. These are things that are not easy to quantify, so critical theory gives us another way of drawing out the complexity of these relations in what is happening in Sierra Leone. While we need numbers in order to be able to analyse patterns of inequality, poverty and the like, numbers are not an explanation. An explanation requires something different and that is why critical theory is really useful.

13.5 Reflections on Neo-liberalism as a Globalised Phenomenon

Neo-liberalism, as the study shows, has been presented by global institutions such as IMF, OECD, World Bank, WTO and the UN as a panacea for the development of poor countries. It is considered as a form of best practice, introduced in part as a response to government inability to cope with the problems faced by the education and health care sector. Kapoor (2002) argues that Third World countries, including Sierra Leone have become specimens of this globalised phenomenon, with economic growth as the 'unquestioned norm' and goal to emulate. The free-market enterprise, through the policies of privatisation, decentralisation and controlled government is considered better than state-guided development. This may be true for other countries but in the case of Sierra Leone it is inadequate. This is because a perfect, competitive and free-market system is ideological and the world consist of a sophistication of asymmetrical relations which makes it very difficult to achieve this model in practice. Its effects is far-reaching: it subordinate human wants and life to market and profit; led to an increased commodification in the provision of education and health care

services which, as the study shows, is not in the best interest of Sierra Leone; created an iniquitous system that has given rise to unequal access to quality education and health care services, thus augmenting fears of stratification on the basis of an individual being rich or poor.

Another important point to note is that the reforms are not a reaction to domestic demand by citizens but was promoted in a top-down fashion by international agencies. Democracy and deliberative policy-making that is the core of critical theory are subordinated to the assigned benefits of business and political elites. This is because the Sierra Leone Government is heavily dependent on donor resources, not only in supporting the provision of education and health care but also Government's budget in particular. Hence, the demand for aid, loan and the need to attract foreign investment have made the Government to mortgage its independence to develop locally-own policies to foreign organisations, and in this process leaves out key stakeholders. Because of this uneven power relationship, the free-market is subjecting people and society to an ideological agenda, making people exposed to forces over which they have little or no control.

Therefore one area upon which to reflect on this work is that there are obvious questions about this strategy. Neo-liberalism has become a new variant of contemporary imperialism which the study refers to as "neo-imperialism", and the state as an "agent of this imperialism". It has placed enormous external burdens on domestic governments to follow an international framework of "good governance". Over the years, this has manifested in different forms such as structural adjustment programmes, and more recent, through poverty reduction strategy programme (PRSP), which dictates how the country should be governed, and the Open Governance Initiative championed by Tony Blair in Sierra Leone and other African countries. Key social issues including the provision of better education and health care services are not been prioritised but left to market forces. Conditions for discussion seen by Critical Theorists as the most important in providing an environment for fair, open and democratic means of participation that leads to genuine consensus in how 'real policy' is determined is completely absent. Instead, it uses an ideological framework that is simply controlled by a hidden power relation on how knowledge/policy is constituted, the antithesis of democracy. It is therefore very problematic to imagine that this strategy is for the great masses of people living in poor conditions in Sierra Leone, while it does not address their needs and does nothing to deal with the security of their lives.

Also significant is addressing the issue of what the neo-liberal framework perceived as 'good governance'. Neo-liberals argue that market fails because of bad governance and what Sierra

Leone needs is good governance free of corruption in delivering access to better education and health care services. While the study agrees with this view it also takes into consideration that the concept of 'good governance' is a very complicated subject. In fact is there good governance anywhere in the world? For example, there are governments that are committed to forms of social redistribution such as Venezuela, Uruguay and even Cuba. This study notes that Cuba is one of the few countries in the world where government spending as a percentage of total health expenditure reflects state commitment to health provision to the entire population. In addition, Cuba is also one of the first countries in the world to send 165 medical personnel, consisting of doctors, nurses and other medical experts to Sierra Leone to help address the problem of health insecurity resulting from the Ebola crisis which began in April, 2014, when other countries were offering money, and were reluctant to send human resource that is most needed. These governments are problematic in some ways because they have autocratic regimes and no democracy but on the other hand they have done these things. Does that make them bad governance, this study argues that no it does not. Similarly, Sierra Leone has a democratically elected government and, more recently, successful economic growth and that is a good thing. But do they attend to the needs of the poor, and are there policies that would create a framework of human security for the population? This study argues that no it does not. This is because other indicators such as education, health, poverty and unemployment are lagging far behind. The recent Ebola crisis exposes the weaknesses of the health system in Sierra Leone and the resulting health crisis. Therefore the concept of good governance, presented in the form of privatisation and decentralisation policies, set out by international institutions is a very complicated subject. Their framework of good governance is not just about material or physical control of taking the country's mineral resources away, but there is also an ideological side to it, which means these are our ideas you should use them otherwise you are not considered to have met the criteria of good governance. That is the power to impose the meaning of governance, which this study saw as a new and disguised form of imperialism.

The study agrees with Munck (1999:58) that not only did this new face of imperialism constrain the development of productive forces but, ultimately, made development impossible. It disregard important concerns in tackling poverty, lack of access to better education and health care, and the inadequate attention given to socio-economic inequality produced by neo-liberalism. Other commentators are also correct to say that the imposition of neo-liberalism is simply seen as an increase in the power of the countries of the North over those in the South, through the penetration of the multinational corporations and debt

dependency, supervised by the IMF, WTO and the World Bank. It is also worth developing the notion that while neo-liberalism disempowers the poor, it may also create the conditions for increased democratisation, pluralism and empowerment of opposition forces (Munck, 1999:64). Since markets will never be perfect, this therefore makes government interventions very crucial and hence serves as an agent of transformation in order to improve the social well-being of its population. This also requires a strong state that has the ability to handle international demands by underlining distinctive local policy issues. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea have pursued affirmative action policies as wide-ranging device to continue with state-guided neo-liberalism.

13.6 Reflections on the Implications of this Case-Study for Other Post-Conflict Countries

Sierra Leone experiences a unique and is part of a wider chain of practices felt particularly by many African countries outside the core, which are poor, underdeveloped and depends on international organisations such as the World Bank and the IMF for a significant portion of their annual national budget and other support. Hence, with this case-study there are lessons to learn from the implementation of neo-liberal reforms that may initiate policy discussions and also be relevant for other post-conflict countries. First, government needs to understand that education and health care are important social and human right that should be made available without any form of unfairness. The study has shown the following: education is a means of acquiring knowledge and better health care increases labour productivity and hence an improvement in the quality of life; they are vital tools of empowerment for the poor, and because of their multiplier effect they help to eradicate poverty; privatisation as the study reveals has a distributional effect as it affect those from poor socio-economic background; while decentralisation was introduced without adequate attention to the structural transformation needed for it to function successfully. Therefore one of the implications of this study for other post-conflict countries is that it positions education and health to be seen locally as key priority for national development and should be an integral component of human security. Countries with natural resources, including Sierra Leone should use this as an opportunity to gradually win their countries off the culture of dependency on international organisation to regain their independence and work with these organisations as equal partners. This will enable the Government to subject policies to fair, open and democratic discussions as an integral part of the policy formulation process; focus in doing what is right for their people; invest in the public education and health system

in order to make them more competitive and co-exist with their private counterpart in delivering better services; introduce proper management of government revenues; and constructing the kind of institutions, procedures, and structures, as Wilkin argues, that would allow all people to take meaningful part in the decisions that shape their lives. Citizens should become an active partner instead of passive beneficiary of state initiatives.

13.7 Contributions Made to Knowledge

This study has attempted to examine neo-liberalism within the context of education and health as a global development policy, with a focus of how the policies were developed and implemented and linking the effect to human security. On this basis, the study has contributed to the transformation of the education and health system not only in improving access to and the quality of services provided, but also in making the system more effective and equitable through a change in policy. To be specific, two contributions were made. First, the study has added perspective of an alternative to the neo-liberal reforms by considering the relevance of democratic mechanisms in shaping reforms in economic and social policy (see Chapter 6). Second, the study has also made a contribution to the emerging evidence-based scholarly literature that critically evaluates the effects of the reforms on human security as shown in Chapters 11 and 12.

13.8 Recommendations

This section offers some practical recommendations for policy-makers, Governments and other education and health consultants for future action, which depart from some of the issues that were brought to the fore in this study. To achieve the goal of human security in Sierra Leone, by this I mean, to ensure that people have equal access to quality education and health services irrespective of their socio-economic background, the following actions should be taken:

- 1) To have the kind of structures that enable all people to meaningfully take part in the decisions that shape their lives. This is a key element of human security and it is necessary to strengthen citizens' and other local actors' voices in governance (empowerment) in order to develop effective local policies that are compatible with national priorities instead of being imposed from outside. The idea of extrapolating policies from outside as a template for poor countries, as is the case with Sierra Leone, will have a disastrous consequence.

- 2) Government intervention and commitment (political will) is needed to invest in the education and health system. The reason for this is to make public schools and public health institutions competitive and co-exist with their private counterparts. This will off-set the high charges set by private providers.
- 3) The education and health budget should be increased, especially in line with Government revenues from mining, which has improved considerably in the last few years. The Abuja target set out by African Heads of government in 2002, to devote 15% of the national budgets to health should be met.
- 4) There should be an effective regulatory framework to ensure that public and private providers do not exploit those who can afford to pay their services, by providing poor quality services, and make excessive profit.
- 5) The provision of education and health should be a political and social priority in development policy as it reduces poverty and improve human security. They should be seen as a universal social and human rights and an essential part to human development.
- 6) Civil society organisations can provide significant support, but they must be incorporated into a strong public system.
- 7) The governance structures should be improved to address the issues of corruption which exist within all facet of society.

13.9 Scope for Future Research

The focus of this study is to conduct a critical evaluation of the effects of neo-liberal reforms in achieving the goal of human security. However, human security is a very broad concept as this study has illustrated and hence was limited to only education and health. Other forms of human security that are relevant to advance the basic human needs of people include food security, environmental security and water security. Hence, further research should look at these areas to unpack the policies that have been introduced through the lens of the theory of imperialism associated with developing countries and carry out a critical evaluation to understand its effects on the wider society.

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